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A HOME WEEKLY

FOR WINTER NIGHTS
AND SUMMER DAYS.

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No. 291.

WAITING FOR THE MORROW.

BY L. C. GREENWOOD.

Tell me, in my chamber
All alone I sit,
Sometimes at the window
I can see a shadow flit.
I think of thee, my darling,
And the league that twist us lies,
How dreary is the distance,
And how vain I strain mine eyes,
I'm waiting for the morrow.

The night comes slow, my darling,
Yet slower comes the morrow;
And longingly I'm waiting
To see the golden arrow
Of light dart through my window.
The sun's first and brightest ray,
The swiftest of all heralds—
Announcing the new-born day,
While waiting for the morrow.

I'm waiting for the morrow,
For a joy I then expect;
It is the longed-for missive
With thy loving words bedecked.
Sweet words of tender meaning,
Which alone I can discern;
I long to send the answer
Of affection in return,
While waiting for the morrow.

I'm waiting for the dawning
When the light steals faint and clear
Over the marble casement
At which I am sitting here.
What if the bright to-morrow
Come with empty hands to me,
Should I this sweet hope banish,
Or cherish a doubt of thee?
My hope would be—*to-morrow!*

Erminie:

THE GIPSY QUEEN'S VOW.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,
AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "AN AW-
FUL MYSTERY," "VICTORIA," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER V.

MOTHER AND SON.

"Oh, my son, Absalom! my son, my son, Absalom! Would to God, I might die for thee! Oh! Absalom! my son, my son!"

THAT same night; that night of storm and tempest without and still fiercer storm and tempest within; that same night—three hours later; in a narrow, dark, noisome cell, with grated window and iron-barred door, with a rude pallet of straw comprising the furniture, and one flickering, uncertain lamp lighting its tomb-like darkness, sat two young men.

One of these was a youth of three-and-twenty; tall and slender in form, with a dark, clear complexion; a strikingly handsome face; a fierce, flashing eye of fire; thick, clustering curls of jet; a daring, reckless air, and an expression of mingled scorn, hatred, defiance and fierceness in his face. There were fetters on his slender wrists and ankles, and he wore the degrading dress of a condemned felon.

By his side sat Lord Ernest Villiers—his handsome face looking deeply sad and grave.

"And this is all, Germaine?" he said, sorrowfully. "Can I do nothing at all for you?" "Nothing. What do you think I want? Is not the government, in its fatherly care, going to clothe, feed, and provide for me during the remainder of my mortal life? Why, man, do you think me unreasonable?"

He laughed a bitter, mocking laugh, terrible to hear.

"Germaine, Heaven knows, if I could do anything for you, would," said Lord Villiers, excitedly. "My father, like all the rest of the world, believes you guilty, and I can do nothing. But if it will be any consolation, remember that you leave one in England who still believes you innocent."

"Thank you, Villiers. There is another, too, who, I think, will hardly believe I have taken to petty pilfering, your father and the rest of the magnates of the land to the contrary notwithstanding."

"Who is that, Germaine?"

"My mother."

"Where is she? Can I bring her to you?" said Lord Villiers, starting up.

"You are very kind; but it is not in your power to do so," said the prisoner, quietly. "My mother is probably in Yetholm with her tribe. You don't need to be told now I am a gipsy; my interesting family history was pretty generally made known at my trial."

Again he laughed that short, sarcastic laugh so sad to hear.

"My dear fellow, I think none the worse of you for that. Gipsy or Saxon, I cannot forget you once saved my life, and that you have for years been my best friend."

"Well, it is pleasant to know that there is one in the world who cares for me; and if I do die like a dog among my fellow-convicts, my last hour will be cheered by the thought," said the young man, drawing a deep breath.

"If ever you see my mother, which is not likely, tell her I was grateful for all she did for me; you need not tell her I was innocent, for she will know that. (There is another, too—)"

He paused, and his dark face flushed, and then grew paler than before.

"My dear Germaine, if there is any message I can carry for you, you have only to command me," said the young lord, warmly.

"No; it is as well she should not know it—better, perhaps," muttered the prisoner, half to himself. "I thank you for your friendly kindness, Villiers; but it will not be necessary."

"And your mother, Germaine, how am I to know her?"

"Oh, I forgot! Well, she's called the gipsy



"Remember, when far away, you leave one behind who will wreak vengeance for all we have both suffered."

Keturah, and is queen of her tribe. It is something to be a queen's son—is it not?" he said, with another hard, short laugh.

"Keturah, did you say?" repeated Lord Villiers, in surprise.

"Yes. What has surprised you now?"

"Why, the simple fact that I saw her three hours ago."

"Saw her! Where?"

"At my father's house. She came to see him."

Germaine sprung up, and while his eyes fiercely flashed, he exclaimed:

"Come to see Lord De Courcy? My mother came to see him? Villiers, you do not mean to say that my mother came to beg for my life?"

"My dear fellow, I really do not know. The interview was a private one. All I do know is, that half an hour after my father returned among his guests, looking very much as if he had just seen a ghost. In fact, I never saw him with so startled a look in all my life before. Whether your mother had anything to do with it or not, I really cannot say."

"If I thought she could stoop to sue for me," exclaimed the youth, through his clenched teeth; "but no, my mother was too proud to do it. My poor, poor mother! How was she looking, Villiers?"

"Very haggard, very thin, very worn and wild, very wretched, in a word—though that was to be expected."

"Poor mother!" murmured the youth, with quivering lips, as he bowed his face in his manacled hands, and his manly chest rose and fell with strong emotion.

"My dear fellow," said Lord Villiers, with a look of incredulity, "your mother shall never want while I live."

The prisoner wrung his hand in silence.

"If you like, I will try to discover her, and send her to you before you—"

His voice choked, and he stopped.

"My dear Villiers, you have indeed proven yourself my friend," said the convict, gratefully. "If you could see her, and send her to me before I leave England to-morrow, you would be conferring the greatest possible favor on me. There are several things of which I wish to speak to her, and which I cannot reveal to any one else—not even to you."

"Then I will instantly go in search of her," said Lord Villiers, rising and taking his hat.

"My dear Germaine, good-by."

"Farewell, Ernest. God bless you!"

The hand of the peer and the gipsy met in a strong clasp, but neither could speak.

And so they parted. The prison door closed between the convicted felon and his high-born friend. Did either dream how strangely they were destined to meet again? With his face shaded by his hand, the prisoner sat; that small white hand, delicate as a lady's, doomed now to the unceasing labor of the convict, when a noise as of persons in altercation in the passage without met his ears. He raised his head to listen, and recognized the gruff, hoarse voice of his jailer; then the sharp, passionate voice of a woman; and, lastly, the calm, clear tones of Lord Ernest Villiers. His words seemed to decide the matter; for the huge key turned in the rusty lock, the heavy door swung back on its hinges, and the tall form of gipsy Keturah passed into the cell.

"Mother!"

The prisoner started to his feet, and with a passionate cry: "Oh, my son! my son!" he was clasped in the arms of his mother—clasped and held there in a fierce embrace, as though she defied Heaven itself to tear them apart.

"Thank Heaven, mother, that I see you again!"

"Heaven!" she broke out, with passionate fierceness; "never mention it again! What is heaven, and God, and mercy, and happiness? All a mockery, and worse than a mockery!"

"My poor mother!"

"What have I done, that I should lose you?" she cried, with a still-increasing fierceness. "What crime have I committed, that I should be doomed to a hell upon earth! He was conceived in sin and born in iniquity, even as I was; yet the God you call upon permits him to live happy, rich, honored, and prosperous, while I—oh! it maddens me to think of it! But I will have revenge!"—she added, while her fierce eyes blazed, and her long, bony hand clenched—"yes, fearful revenge! If I am doomed to perdition, I shall drag him down along with me!"

"Mother! mother! Do not talk so! Be calm!"

"Calm! With these flames, like eternal fires, raging in my heart and brain! Oh, for the hour when his life-blood shall cool their blazing!"

"Mother, you are going mad!" said the young man, almost sternly. "Unless you are calm, we must part."

"Oh, yes! We will part to-morrow. You will go over the boundless sea with all the thieves and murderers, and scum of London, and I—I will live for revenge. By-and-by you will kill yourself, and I will be hung for his murder."

She laughed a dreary, cheerless laugh, while her eyes grew unnaturally bright with the fires of incipient insanity.

"Poor mother!" said the youth, sadly. "This is the hardest blow of all! Try and bear up, for my sake, mother. Did you see Lord De Courcy to-night?"

"I did. May Heaven's heaviest curses light on him!" exclaimed the woman, passionately. "Oh! to think that he, that any man, should hold my son's life in the hollow of his hand, while I am here, obliged to look on, powerless to avert the blow! May God's worst vengeance light on him, here and hereafter!"

Her face was black with the terrific storm of inward passion; her eyes glaring, blazing, like those of a wild beast; her long, talon-like fingers clenched until the nails sunk deep in the quivering flesh.

"Mother, did you stoop to sue for pardon for me to-night?" said the young man, while his brow contracted with a dark frown.

"Oh, I did! I did! I groveled at his feet. I cried, I shrieked, I adjured him to pardon you—I, who never knelt to God or man before—and he refused! I kissed the dust at his feet, and he replied by a cold refusal. But woe to thee, Earl De Courcy!" she cried, bounding to her feet, and dashing back her wild black hair. "Woe to thee, and all thy house! for it were safer to tamper with the lightning's chain than with the aroused tigress Keturah."

"Mother, nothing is gained by working yourself up to such a pitch of passion; you only beat the air with your breath. I am calm."

"Yes, calm as a volcano on the verge of eruption," she said, looking in his gleaming eyes and icy smile.

"And I am submissive, forbearing, and forgiving."

"Yes, submissive as a crouching lion—forgiving as a tiger robbed of its young—bearing as a serpent preparing to spring."

He had averted her—even her, that raving maniac—into calm, by the cold, steady glitter of his dark eyes; by the quiet, chilling smile on his lip. In that fixed, iron, relentless look, she read a strong, determined purpose, relentless as death, or doom, or the grave; terrific in its very quiet, implacable in its very depth of calm, overtopping and surmounting her own.

"We understand each other, I think," he said, quietly. "You perceive, mother, how utterly idle these mad threats and curses of yours are. They will effect nothing but to have you imprisoned as a dangerous lunatic; and it is necessary you should be free to fulfill my last bequest."

Another mood had come over the dark, fierce woman while he spoke. The demoniac look of passion that had hitherto convulsed her face, gave way to one of despairing sorrow, and stretching out her arms, she passionately cried:

"Oh, my son! my only one! the darling of my old age! my sole earthly pride and hope! Oh, Reginald! would to God we had both died ere we had lived to see this day!"

It was the very agony of grief—the last passionate, despairing cry of a mother's utmost love, wrung fiercely from her tortured heart.

"My poor mother—my dear mother!" said the youth, with tears in his dark eyes, "do not give way to this wild grief. Who knows what the future may bring forth?"

She made no reply; but sat with both arms clasped round her knees—her dry, burning, tearless eyes glaring before her on vacancy.

"Do not despair, mother; we may yet meet again. Who knows?" he said, musingly, after a pause.

She turned her red, inflamed eyeballs on him in voiceless inquiry.

"There are such things as breaking chains and escaping, mother."

"Still that lurid, straining gaze, but no reply. And I, if it be in the power of man, I shall escape—I shall return, and then—"

He paused, but his eyes finished the sentence. Lucifer, taking his last look of heaven, might have worn just such a look—so full of relentless hate, burning revenge, and undying defiance.

"You may come, but I will never live to see you," said the gipsy, in a voice so deep, hollow and unnatural, that it seemed issuing from a tomb.

"You will—you must, mother. I have a sacred trust to leave you, for which you must live," he said, impetuously.

"A trust, my son?"

"Yes. One that will demand all your care for many years. You shall hear my story, mother. I would not trust any living being but you; but I can confide fearfully in you."

"You have only to name your wishes, Reginald. Though I should have to wade through blood to fulfill them, fear not."

"Nothing so desperate will be required, mother. The less blood you have on your hands the better. My advice to you is, when I am gone, to return to Yetholm, and wait with patience for my return—for return I will, in spite of everything."

Her bloodshot eyes kindled fiercely with invincible determination as he spoke, but she said nothing.

"My story is a somewhat long one," he said, after a pause, during which a sad shadow had fallen on his handsome face; "but I suppose it is necessary I should tell you all. I thought never to reveal it to any human being; but I did not dream then of ever being a convicted felon, as I am now."

He had been sitting hitherto with his head resting on his hand; now he arose and began pacing to and fro his narrow cell, while the dark, stern woman, crouching in a distant corner like a dusky shadow, watched him with her eyes of fire, and prepared to listen.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHILD-WIFE.

"Oh, had we never, never met. Or could this heart's en now forget. How linked, how blessed we might have been, Had fate not frowned so dark between!"

—MOORE.

"Eight years ago, mother," began the prisoner, "I first entered Eton. Through your kindness, I was provided with money enough to enable me to mix on terms of equality in all things with the highest of its high-born students. No one dreamed I was a gipsy; they would as soon have thought of considering themselves one as me. I adopted the name of Reginald Germaine, and represented myself as the son of an exiled French count, and being by Nature gifted with a tolerable share of good looks, and any amount of cool assurance, I soon worked my way up above most of my titled compeers, and became ringleader and prime favorite with students and professors. They talk of good blood showing itself equally in men as in horses, mother. I don't know how that may be, but certain it is the gipsy's son equaled all, and was surpassed by none in college. In fencing, shooting, riding, boxing, rowing, I was as much at home as reading Virgil or translating Greek. If it is any consolation to you, mother, to know what an exceedingly talented son you have," he said, with a bitter smile, "all this will be very consoling to you—more especially as Latin, and Greek, and all the rest of my manifold accomplishments will be extremely necessary to me among my fellow-convicts in Van Dieman's Land. It is very probable I will establish an infant school for young thieves and pickpockets when the day's labor is over. I wonder if our kind, fatherly, far-seeing British government dreams what an incalculable treasure they possess in the person of Germaine, the convicted burglar!"

His bitter, jeering tone was terrible to hear; but the dark, burning glare of his fierce eyes was more terrible still. Oh, it was a dreadful fate to look forward to—a chained, manacled convict for life—and so unjustly condemned! With his fierce, gipsy blood, is it any wonder that every noble and generous feeling in his breast should turn to gall!

The dusky form crouching in the corner moved not, spoke not; but the inflamed eyes glared in the darkness like two red-hot coals.

"Well, mother, I was boasting of my cleverness when I interrupted myself—was I not?" he said, after a pause, during which he had been pacing, like a caged lion, up and down. "It is an exciting subject, you perceive; and if I get a little incoherent at times, you must only pass it over, and wait until I come to the point. That brief *expose* of my standing in the school was necessary, after all, as it will help to show the sort of estimation I was held in. When the vacations came, numberless were the invitations I received to accompany my fellow-students home. Having no home of my own to go to, I need hardly say those invitations were invariably accepted. How the good people who so lavishly bestowed their hospitality upon me feel now, is a question not very hard to answer. I fancy I can see the looks of horror, amazement and outraged dignity that will fill some of those aristocratic mansions, when they learn that the dashing son and heir of the exiled Count Germaine, on whom they have condescended to smile so benignly, is no other than the convicted gipsy thief. It will be a regular farce to witness, mother."

He laughed, but the grim, shadowy face in the corner was as immovable as a figure in stone.

"Among the friends I made at Eton," he went on, "there was one—a fine, princely-hearted fellow about my own age—called Lord Everly. He was my 'fag' for a time, and, owing to a similarity of tastes and dispositions, we were soon inseparable friends. Wherever one was, there the other was sure to be, until we were nicknamed 'Damon and Pythias' by the rest. Of course, the first vacation after his coming, I received a pressing invitation to accompany him home; and, without requiring much coaxing, I went."

The young man paused, and a dark, earnest shadow passed over his fine face. When he again resumed, his voice was low and less bitter.

"I met my fate there, mother—the star of my destiny, that rose, for a few brief, fleeting moments, and then set forever for me. I was a hot-blooded, hot-headed, hotter-headed boy of nineteen then, who followed the impulse of his own headstrong passions wherever they chose to lead, without ever stopping to think. At Everly Hall I met the cousin of my friend—one of the most perfectly beautiful creatures it has ever been my lot to see. Only fourteen years of age, she was so well-grown, and so superbly-proportioned, as to be, in looks, already a woman; and a woman's heart she already possessed. Her name, mother, it is not necessary to tell now. Suffice it to say, that name was one of the proudest of England's proud sons, and her family one of the highest and noblest in the land. She was at Everly Hall, spending her vacation, too, and daily we were thrown together. I had never loved before—never felt even those first moonlight-on-water affairs that most young men rave about. My nature is not one of those that love lightly; but it was as resistless, as impetuous,

MY FRIEND'S SON.

BY CHARLES MORRIS.

"A charming boy, my son," he said.
 "Come soon, and see my sick-sister; she's
 so pretty, playful, innocent—
 The image of myself."
 I went—may Heaven forgive the sin;
 I will not soon repeat that trip.
 I went; and found that perfect child
 A perfect little rip.
 His mother's eyes; his father's nose;
 His uncle's pretty, sportive ways.
 I take no stock in juvenescence,
 So this deponent says.
 Just hear his pretty prattle," cried
 The cherub's mother, full of joy;
 To keep the conversation up,
 Did that tremendous boy.
 He rubbed molasses in my hair,
 He crawled about me like a shrimp.
 He put a bent pin on my chair,
 That charming little—imp.
 I had to smile, and seem amused;
 The cunning rogue, just look at that!"
 The father said. It was such fun
 For them and for their—brat.
 And still, with ever growing vim,
 He spread himself, that tender youth.
 Told how he cut the cherry tree—
 He had to tell the mother too.
 He climbed the table like a cat,
 And like a stone dropped down again.
 Alas! he was not born to kill
 Himself just there and then.
 And next he set my teeth on edge
 With howls that made the welkin ring.
 Their cherub still he was, but with
 A sadly-broken wing.
 And so it went, from bad to worse;
 An enigma terrible was he,
 Who bolted down the very things
 I wanted most, at tea.
 He wiped his fingers on my coat,
 He spilled the gravy by my lap—
 Oh, had I been his parent long,
 Enough for one sound slap!
 I had to grin, he was their pride;
 I spent six dreadful hours about
 With that young imp; they were the last,
 I've had my eye-teeth cut.
 Enough is better than a feast,
 And yet I dare not, should I run,
 Tell that proud father what I think
 About his petted son.
 But, if he asks me there again
 While that boy lives, I'll yield to fate,
 Without delay, to California.
 Nix I'll emigrate.
 And bury me in some deep gulch
 Upon the new world's furthest rim,
 Rather than see a son-in-law
 One of earth's cherubim.

The Stage-Driver's Story.

BY FREDERICK H. DEWEY.

"Well, gents, it ain't very thrilling nor fast-
 nating, as book writers say, nor it ain't fiction,
 which kinder rubs off the gloss of it; but if you
 want to hear it, here goes," said our burly,
 good-humored driver as we stopped in a stream
 to allow the brown geldings to drink.
 "Let us hear it by all means!" was our un-
 animous cry.
 The driver smiled, and driving up the op-
 posite bank lighted his short pipe, and began as
 we howled away toward the distant, purple-
 tinted hills.
 "It was driving this same stage, then—num-
 ber forty, though on a different division—that
 between Pawnee Rock and Murston's ranche.
 Times was lively then—free, but not easy
 times. What with Blackfeet, Raperos and
 'roadmen,' my time was pretty much occupied,
 and many's the day I've lashed the leaders into
 a dead run to get away from them, the high-
 waymen particularly. I was armed then to the
 pockets; and in place of the single 'navy'
 I pack now, I carried two and an ace, which is
 a bowie.
 "My division was twenty good miles long,
 mostly over a hilly country called 'the Knobs'
 from the queer shape of the hills. The thick
 hazel brush which covered these knobs was a
 good skulking place for evil-doers, and I look-
 ed mighty sharp when I was dodging among
 those little hills, I can tell you, as they had a
 bad name, on account of several men being
 murdered there. I had twice been attacked
 there, too, by Skinny Eph, a desperate robber-
 captain, and I always expected to meet him in
 among 'em; and if I did it would go hard with
 me, 'cause he had a grudge against me.
 "Well, one morning about ten o'clock, I took
 the stage as it stopped to change horses, and
 mounted the box seat, ready to drive off. As I
 did so I saw there was a single passenger in-
 side, and I never was so surprised in my life.
 Not at the passenger exactly, for I had 'em
 every day; but because it was a woman.
 "Yes, sirs!" continued the driver, bringing
 his fist down upon his knee; "a woman, or ra-
 ther girl of sixteen, or about that. I was
 dumfounded! to see a female, all alone in
 them rough territories, was something I hadn't
 been used to—leastways, seeing such a pretty
 one as she was.
 "She called to me, and said: 'Will you be
 so kind as to allow me to ride outside? It is
 very close in here.'
 "That kinder knocked me under the weather,
 for I wasn't over bold. I don't exactly remem-
 ber what I said—I think it was yes; anyhow,
 she got out and climbed up beside me.
 "Goodness—what a face and form! big
 brown eyes shining for all the world like a
 squirrel's; brown hair long and wavy, glim-
 mering like the off leader's hide, yonder—only
 a sight prettier; teeth like quartz—but there!
 I couldn't describe her if I tried a year.
 "She said she was from Ohio, and was going
 to join her father and brother in Placerville;
 and some one else I judged by the way she re-
 dended and looked down. However I can't
 vouch for it.
 "Well, though a whenishful myself, I
 managed to say something, and she chattered
 like a chipmunk in her sweet way, keeping me
 laughing all the time, until we drew near the
 knobs. When about fifty yards away from the
 first little bushy hill I drew in and looked
 ahead over the road.
 "What do you see?" she asked. I didn't
 want to alarm her, so I didn't say I had seen a
 man on a black horse, wonderfully like Skinny
 Eph (the man, I mean), dodging behind a tree
 a half-mile or so away. But whipping up again
 I drove into the knobs, keeping a sharp eye on
 the thickets near-by, and on the tall button-
 wood ahead. She didn't suspect anything, and
 still kept her tongue running, asking me all
 sorts of odd questions. We had gone about
 half the distance to the tree, when we reached
 a place where the road ran alongside a little
 hollow. We had no more'n got opposite to it
 when a voice in the hollow said, sharply:
 "'Halt!'
 "Down in the hollow was a dark, wild-look-
 ing man, trying to aim a revolver on me and
 climb over a big log at the same time. I knew
 at a peep who he was—one of Eph's gang. He
 looked surly and wicked, and kept trying to
 climb over the huge log and keep his revolver
 aimed steady at me. I kinder drew in for a
 second, then seeing he couldn't hit me for he
 was fixed, I drew and blazed away at him.
 He kinder dodged a bit, afore I shot, and by
 doing it he saved his life, for the ball sung by
 him and struck his horse which was standing

close by. The bullet hit the horse in the back,
 and yelling with pain he jumped up on the road
 and tore by us like the wind. That stampeeded
 my animals, and they ran away with me afore
 I could say Jack Robinson.

"As soon as they jerked away from my hold
 I said to the girl, who was scared 'most to
 death:

"Don't touch the lines, now!"

"I knew that women always grab the lines,
 and generally tip the outfit over in the ditch,
 when the team runs away, and I knew all
 women were alike—at least I thought they
 were. But, gents, this pretty little thing,
 though white as a sheet, just leaned away out
 over the side to give me elbow room—yes, by
 Jove! she did. How's that for nerve!"

"The fellow behind let out a big oath, and
 fired after us, but he shot wild, the ball going
 clean over us. Knowing he couldn't hit us then,
 I pulled and tugged at the horses who were
 tearing after the robber's running horse. Ge-
 neral how the old coach did bump and hammer
 the ground. Luckily the road was tolerably
 level or we'd 'a' been in the ditch in less'n a
 minute. But the plucky girl kept leaning over
 the side, and having room for my elbows, I
 managed to keep pretty well in the middle of
 the road.

"In the confusion I had clean forgot the rob-
 ber I had seen ahead, but rec'lected him mighty
 quick when he rode out of the bushes, and stop-
 ping in the middle of the road faced me and
 sighted across his gun. I knew him—he was
 Skinny Eph, and was dead center on the shoot."

"We had gone over right smart of ground
 in our short s'ampede, and warn't more'n a
 hundred yards away from him. I knew I
 couldn't win in the horses in that short dis-
 tance, I knew he would have to get out'n the
 road or else get run over; and laying on the
 whip I gave the nags the lines, resolving to
 shoot by him like a rocket.

"But Skinny Eph was 'cute—he dropped
 on my intention, and saw that if ever I got by
 him, the mails, the express-box full of treas-
 ure, and what money we might happen to
 have about us were lost to him forever. So,
 you see, 'twas his interest to stop the coach,
 and that could only be done by shooting me.
 Once loose from my hold on the lines, the
 horses would soon overturn the coach, and the
 hull outfit would be his to plunder."

"As I said before, Eph was dead-center on
 the shoot, and as I see him peeping over the
 sights of his rifle, I gave myself up for gone.
 But, kinder obstinate by natur', I determined
 to balk him if possible, and said to the gal:

"I'll shoot me—"

"So many and no more words got out of
 my mouth when Eph shot, and I felt a sting-
 ing pain in my arm. We had by this time
 got opposite him, and I was clinging to the
 lines with my left hand when Eph whipped
 out his revolver, fired again, and the lines
 dropped from my hands; I was shot in the left
 shoulder-blade.

"For a second I watched the lines slowly
 slipping over the dasher to the ground, and
 felt that all was up. 'We are gone, my pretty,'
 I said.

"No we ain't!" she cried, with a little
 scream. The horses, knowing that they were
 loose, and frantic, were leaving the road, and
 making toward the timber, where the coach
 would be upset in a jiffy, when the little crea-
 ture, looking never so pretty, caught the lines
 as they were slipping to the ground, drew 'em
 taut, and pulling on the off line, guided the
 leaders into the road again. How is that for
 nerve!"

"Can you hold 'em, my dear?" I asked.
 For, bless you, I couldn't lift either hand.

"I'll try," she said—'I've drove before to-
 day."

"Then keep 'em in the road and let 'em
 run!" I said. Then I looked back.

"Skinny Eph was close behind, coming at
 a tearing gallop and bound to overhaul us.
 His horse was a better animal than old stiff-
 ened stage horses, pulling a coach up a grade in-
 to the bargain, and he was gaining mighty
 fast. Before long he would be up with us;
 then, says I, God have mercy on the poor lit-
 tle creature's life, for Eph don't care for wo-
 men and children any more than men."

"It was necessary, for the sake of our lives
 and the express treasure, and mails, that Eph
 should be stopped."

"Can you shoot a revolver, dear?" I asked
 her.

"I never did in my life," she answers,
 working hard to keep the horses in the road.

"Can you try?" I asked again. For you see
 'twas a desperate chance.

"I don't dare to let go the reins," she said,
 never taking her bonny brown eyes off the
 leaders.

"Put 'em down on the footboard," I says,
 and I'll put my foot on 'em." She did so.

"Now take a revolver from my belt."

"She did that, too, and very handy about it
 she was.

"Now take good aim—at his body—and
 fire!"

"She raised the hammer, took a short aim,
 shut her eyes, dodged, and fired; and the
 dodge she made sent the bullet singing through
 the air fifty feet over Eph's head.

"Ha! ha! ha!" yelled Eph, coming closer
 every minute. 'Pull in yer horses, yer fool!'
 he bawled. 'Don't yer see the game is up!'

"Try ag'in, dear!" I said. 'Don't shut
 your eyes—the noise ain't going to hurt you.'

"She raised the revolver again. 'Remem-
 ber and keep your eyes open,' I said. She
 took short aim and fired with her eyes wide
 open. But she dodged, just before pulling the
 trigger—kinder afraid, as I have seen more
 than one man, that she was going to be blown
 up."

"This bullet went nearer than the first, but
 it still missed Eph by ten feet or more. He
 roared a horse-laugh again.

"It was getting desperate. Eph was now
 riding abreast of the baggage-rack, and in a
 few more leaps would be abreast of the horses.
 I detected his design; he was aiming to shoot
 down one of the leaders and bring the coach
 to a halt. Then all would be lost. I had got
 so I didn't care partic'larly about myself, but
 the express, the mail, and the dear little girl—
 God help her, thinks I, if she ever falls into
 his hands!"

"Skinny Eph drew closer and closer, and
 raised his revolver with a laugh like a devil's.
 I watched his aim; he was drawing a bead on
 the off leader.

"For God's sake, girl," I cried, 'shoot, and
 don't dodge! Shoot, and shoot to kill him!'
 God have mercy on you as well as me, if ever
 we fall into his hands!"

"If I ever saw the exultation of a devil, I
 saw it on Skinny Eph's face as he looked at
 the girl, at me, at the mails and express-box,
 and then peered along his revolver, bearing on
 the off leader.

"Just then the girl leaned across me—and
 how her cheeks burned and eyes shone!—and
 thrusting the revolver down within ten feet of
 Eph, took an aim as coolly as I ever saw aim
 took, and fired.

"Eph dropped his arm, shrieked, turned his

face distorted with agony toward me—looked
 for a moment, then his eyes became glassy—
 reeled, groaned, and tossing his arms over his
 head, fell out of the saddle, dead, shot right
 through the heart."

"His horse dashed away, terrified, leaving
 Skinny Eph, so long the terror of the overland
 stages, dead as a door-nail in the road."

"We had now got to a long and steep grade,
 and the horses, jaded with their run, were glad
 to slacken and finally halt, quieted down. The
 brave little gal looked round, panted as she
 saw Eph's dead body behind, looked for the
 other robber who was not in sight, turned
 white and fainted dead away on my shoulder.
 But she soon came to, and after the horses got
 rested, took up the lines again and drove into
 Pawnee Rock, a matter of ten mile or more,
 for I was so weak I couldn't set up. When
 the next driver took the lines, she bid me
 good-by, gave me a kiss, and was off for
 Placerville, while I went to bed, where I staid
 for a matter of a month or so."

"I think it was two year ago, when one
 winter I got sick of snow and ice, and took a
 trip to California and to Placerville. There I
 found the little gal, pretty as ever, married to
 the young fellow she had come across to meet,
 the mother of a fine pair of twins, and happy
 as a lark. And that, gents, is the story, such
 as 'tis. And here we are at Winslow's (my
 station), and here I leave you."

Idaho Tom,

THE YOUNG OUTLAW OF SILVERLAND!

BY OLL COOMES.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BILLY TAKES TALL PINE CAPTIVE.

A YELL burst from the warrior's lips. Had
 a wild cat landed upon his back he would not
 have betrayed more terrible surprise. He
 tried to shake his adversary off, but Billy,
 with the strong grip of death itself, locked his
 legs around the red-skin's waist in such a
 manner as prevented him from drawing his
 knife; while, with the power of a constrictor,
 the arms of the youth were clasped over the
 red-skin's throat until life was nearly choked
 out of his body.

The warrior threw himself upon the ground
 and endeavored to roll his foe from his back;
 he tried to rub and crush him off against the
 sharp edges of the rock. Like the Old Man of
 the Sea he clung there as though he had grown
 upon the savage's back.

The latter finally straightened himself up,
 drew a strong breath, and then started off
 across the valley, determined to carry the lad
 off to where his friends were; but Billy seeing
 his object closed tighter on the red-skin's
 throat and choked him until his face grew
 black and he fell to his knees.

"Now then," exclaimed Billy, easing up on
 his jugular, at the same time pressing the
 muzzle of a pistol against his temple by sim-
 ply bending his hand without removing his
 arm from the warrior's throat, "if you at-
 tempt that ag'in, by my soul I'll let rip this
 little pup of war. Turn yer face to yer back
 and mosay strid off, for yees hev got to go
 back to the b'ys wid me."

Again the Indian attempted to draw his
 knife from his girdle, but to his surprise found
 the weapon was gone. This discovery seemed
 to make him all the more desperate, and he
 made another frantic effort to dislodge his
 young enemy from his back; but every hostile
 demonstration that he made was promptly
 checked by Billy, who would tighten his
 grip upon the throat.

The sight was one so ludicrous that it would
 have provoked Diogenes himself into a fit of
 laughter. Nor was the ridiculous performance
 without spectators. Billy's own friends had
 shifted their position to a point where they
 could command a view of the whole scene,
 and even the sober gravity of Bold Heart was
 forced into an outburst of laughter. Wild
 Dick became almost frantic in his emotions,
 and leaning back against a rock laughed till
 the perspiration rolled down his face.

Billy's friends, however, were not the only
 witnesses to the tragic comedy. The Indian's
 friends had also gained a position where they
 could command a view of the valley; but none
 of them dared to advance to their friend's as-
 sistance. They knew that several unerring
 rifles would be brought to bear upon them.
 To attempt to dislodge Billy by a shot under
 the circumstances would be to endanger the
 life of their comrade, when in fact they could
 not fully determine which was really master
 of the situation.

"Will yees mind me, now, ye dumber owl
 spalpeen!" exclaimed Billy, after having ad-
 ministered a severe choking to the savage.

The latter's only reply was a frantic effort
 to get his teeth on Billy's arm; but in this he
 also failed, and another pressure of the jugu-
 lar rendered him more manageable and con-
 vinced him that every attempt to dislodge the
 young leech at his back would be attended
 with a severe punishment. He fully compre-
 hended the disadvantage under which he was
 placed. The cold muzzle of the revolver,
 pressed against his temple, acted like a power-
 ful electric battery upon his nerves. He
 dodged and quivered as though he were going
 into convulsions, and at length, in obedience
 to his "rider's" command, turned his face
 southward. But he refused to budge a step.

"Now don't be shubbunk like a mule, red-
 skin," exclaimed Billy, "jist advance now
 like a rightmint av soldiers or b' the mother
 av Moses I'll let her rip," and he emphasized
 his words by pressing the revolver closer
 against the warrior's temple.

The latter gave his great body a kind of a
 convulsive jerk, then, with an effort that
 seemed to tear his heart-strings, he moved
 slowly away across the valley in the direction
 of Billy's friends.

The savages that were concealed over among
 the rocks and shrubbery saw how matters
 stood and started from their covers to aid their
 unfortunate comrade. But the report of three
 rifles and the fall of one of their number
 forced a precipitous retreat back to shelter.

This repulse seemed to have driven the last
 spark of hope from the red-skin's breast, and
 as if anxious to be rid of his humiliating bur-
 den, he moved on with a quicker step.

Up the acclivity, amid the rocks and tower-
 ing pines, toiled the downcast warrior, while
 his friends looked on with vengeful, burning
 eyes.

"Sheep mighty keeful now, red-skin," ad-
 monished Billy, as his captive picked his way
 up the weary heights; "a single m'lsheep
 might kill yees. Musha! but yees are a
 shout ole booger, red-skin—could carry a
 dozen of the likes of little Billam Brady of
 away-off owd Ireland."

The Indian was as sullen and morose as a
 murderer, never deigning to answer a word
 addressed to him more than to obey the in-
 junctions of his captor. His great form shook
 and trembled at times as though a volcano of

vengeful wrath and power was struggling for
 an outlet. Once he turned and glanced down
 over a fearful precipice. Billy felt his form
 sway like a pine in the wind and his breast
 swell like a pillow tossed by an angry storm.

The youth knew at once that the red-skin
 had self-destruction in his mind and prepared
 to act accordingly. But some unknown im-
 pulse turned the warrior from his suicidal pur-
 pose, and he toiled on up the hill.

They soon came to where Billy's friends
 awaited their arrival.

"Billy Brady," cried Perry, "what in the
 nation are you about?"

"Rhiding up to glory on the back of Sat-
 tan," was Billy's prompt, yet irreverent re-
 ply.

"Billy, you're an audacious young wild-cat—
 a reckless young scallawag," added Wild
 Dick, his face almost burning red with inward
 emotion.

"Och, now, b'ys, don't throw up me poor
 relations to me face. But come right down to
 the fact av it, this rhad skin is a contrary,
 big ole booger, but mees rhaked the owd ring-
 tail from taw. There, Bold Heart," and the
 youth leaped nimbly from the red-skin's back
 with the air of a conqueror—"there now is
 the scalp yees won. Bounce it, b'ys, bounce
 it!"

"No, no," interrupted Perry, with a shud-
 der; "that would be barbarous—inhuman.
 The captive has suffered enough already."

The Indian, who stood with sullen brow and
 folded arms, regarded Perry with a look of si-
 lent thanks, while the cloud upon his face grew
 less dark.

"Mees caught the scalp for Mister Bold
 Heart," said Billy, indifferently, "and he can
 do as he plases 'bout hoisting it off the boog-
 er's snoodle. Only I want him to consider I
 owe him no scalp."

"The red-skin's a livin' captive," Wild Dick
 said, compassionately, "and it 'd be right ag'in
 the laws of civilized warfare to scalp a
 prisoner. It 'd be too much like the red-skins
 would serve us, were we in such a predicam-
 ent, and I boast of some civilized blood."

"But it seems to me," declared Perry,
 "that we're like the man that drew the ele-
 phant at the lottery; we have something on
 our hands that will be a detriment to us."

"To be sure," said Dick, "and so our only
 course is to let him go at liberty."

The Indian seemed to understand all that
 was said, for his dusky face relaxed a little
 more into its natural expression.

"Yes, we'd better let him go," admitted
 Perry.

"On parole?" asked Billy.

"Yes," returned Dick; then he continued,
 addressing the warrior: "Red skin, you have
 been unfortunate in to day's adventure. You
 are now in our power, but I reckon you are
 aware of that fact. We have it within our
 province to kill you; that you also know.
 But look here, red-skin; we're going to do the
 handsome thing by you, in hopes you'll not
 fall to do the same. We are going to let you
 go on parole."

"What that?" inquired the Indian, in toler-
 able English, his face growing brighter.

"A promise on our part to let you go free,
 on condition you will promise to set free the
 first white captive that falls into your hands."

"What if him fall into Ingin's hands?" asked
 the warrior, pointing toward his late cap-
 tor, who stood near, with a grin on his face
 and a twinkle in his eyes.

"You are to let him go because he is willing
 now to let you go. This you must promise be-
 fore ever we set you free. Will you promise
 by the Great Spirit that you will do so?"

"Tall Pine loves life. The young pale-faces
 are not cowards. Tall Pine promises that he
 will set at liberty the first white captive he
 takes."

"If you break faith with us, Tall Pine, we
 will hunt you down like a deer and take your
 life," was Wild Dick's threat.

"Tall Pine has spoken. His tongue is not
 crooked."

"Then go your way, Tall Pine."

"And sin no more," added Billy, nudging
 Perry, while he looked down his nose to keep
 from laughing.

The savage turned, and with all the dignity
 of his proud spirit, walked away. He did not
 hurry. He would not have shown fear, nor
 that he suspected treachery, even if he had en-
 tertained such a thought—not even to have
 saved his life.

"Now, boys," observed Wild Dick, as the
 tall form of the Indian disappeared from sight,
 "Tall Pine and his followers will make it liv-
 ely for us. He may keep his promise and lib-
 erate the first captive taken; but it won't do
 to trust him. 'T'll be to the knife from this
 on."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE RIVALS' COMPACT.

FRANK CASELTON and Idaho Tom gazed at
 each other for a moment after they had sat
 down in the dense shadows of the pines.

Frank noticed the light in Tom's eyes, but
 betrayed no outward fear.

Tom seemed more confused than excited,
 and manifested surprise at having drawn his
 revolver, and at once returned it to his belt.

A faint smile flitted across his face, and he
 moved uneasily upon his seat.

"Frank," he at length said, hesitatingly,
 and in a tone that denoted a reluctance to say
 what was uppermost in his thoughts, "you
 and I have been friends but a short time—a
 few hours, in fact."

"Our acquaintance has been limited," af-
 firmed Frank, in a calm, cool tone.

"But in this time I have come to regard
 you as a gentleman—a boy that can be trust-
 ed," continued Tom.

"To praise oneself is half scandal; but,
 Tom, I have always endeavored to be faithful
 to my friends, and think I have succeeded.
 But pardon my interruption."

"Certainly; but, Frank, will you be willing
 to answer a fair question?"

"Yes; if in my power so to do," answered
 Frank, not a little puzzled by Tom's question,
 and the object he was driving at.

"Last night, when I landed on the floating
 island and made my presence known, I came
 across you and Zoe Leland in conversation."

"You did?" affirmed Frank, an inkling of
 the truth beginning to dawn upon his mind.

"I even heard a few words that passed be-
 tween you, for all I was not eavesdropping,"
 continued the young outlaw. "From the
 manner of your speech, Frank, I naturally
 came to the conclusion that you loved that
 girl. Am I right?"

Frank blushed crimson. His eyes sought
 first the ground, then Tom's piercing orbs, as
 a smile passed over his face.

FATE.

BY FRANK DAVES.

Who is that I see approaching.
With such wondrous light and strength—
On my grounds with pride encroaching?
All in silence. But at length
Some one speaks: "That is Minnie,
Wandering on earth a spell,
And he hath a devil in him,
And he is invincible.
But a shade is coming on him,
But his heart is sick and faint.
Ah! the fate has come upon him,
Common to us, thief and saint.
Who is that in yonder shady,
Beauteous bower, weaving wreaths?
Ah! that is a Saxon lady,
Fairer woman never breathed,
Such a charm the roses lend her,
Such a wonder is her eye,
Such a storm of raven splendour
Is her hair that princes sigh.
But a shade is coming on her,
But her heart is sick and faint;
And the fate has come upon her,
Common to us, thief and saint.
Who is that among the flowers,
Star-eyed, angel-like, and small?
Careless of the lying hours—
Golden-winged, deceiving all,
Ah! that is an embryo woman.
Six years old she is, and she
Is so fair she seems not human,
But some sea-nymph from the sea,
But a shade is coming on her,
But her heart is sick and faint;
And the fate has come upon her,
Common to us, thief and saint.

The Millville Parson.

BY MATTIE DYER BRITTS.

You might have hunted all through Millville and back again, big houses and little houses, and not have found a cooler, cosier, cleaner little nest than Miss Prudence Petticoord's low-roofed, yellow-walled cottage, which stood embowered among tall green trees just out on the edge of the village, away from the dust and noise of the public streets.

Though it was yet early all the morning work was done, the big kitchen as clean and sweet and shiny as a Fifth Avenue parlor, if not as grand. Miss Prudy herself, in a big green sun-bonnet, was sitting on the porch, shelling peas into a shining tin pan, and pretty Bettie Porter, Miss Prudy's orphan niece and adopted daughter, was rattling ripe currants, no redder than her own cheeks, in a big glass bowl.

The ladies were so absorbed in their work or their thoughts, that neither of them heard the click of the little green gate-latch, or the light, firm step which came up the well-swept walk, until a shadow darkened the porch-way, and a cheery voice said, "Good-morning, ladies."

"Land o' massy!" exclaimed Miss Prudy, with a start which almost upset her pan of peas, "if 'tain't the new parson! Come in, Brother Eldridge, we're glad to have you call if we ain't in company fix! Come right in Bettie, open the parlor door."

"No, no!" objected the young minister as he shook hands, "let me sit down out here, it is so pleasant, and I shall not feel as if I was disturbing you."

"Hand a chair, then, Bettie, if Brother Eldridge will sit out here. 'Tis cooler, that's a fact. But then we don't suffer much from heat out here, no time."

"I can believe that," said the young parson, with a smile, and a bow to Bettie as he took the chair she offered. "And that is one reason, because you always look so cool and cosy out here, that I came this morning, Miss Petticoord. I wonder if you could guess my errand."

"I ain't no great hand at guessin'," said Miss Prudy, shaking her head. "I hope 'tain't nothin' very bad."

"It won't be bad for me, if I succeed," said Mr. Eldridge, with a frank smile, as warm as the first. "Truth is, Miss Prudy, I am hunting a home—a boarding place, and I came to see if I couldn't prevail on you and Miss Bettie here to take me in."

"Why—I don't know," said Miss Prudy, slowly, as if debating the point in her own mind.

"I am boarding just now at Brother Smith's," the parson observed; "but they are not conveniently situated to keep me permanently, having so little room."

"There's plenty of room out here, fur's that goes," said Miss Prudy, half-soliloquizing, half-addressing her visitor. "But we haven't been much used to havin' a man round at all, let alone a preacher."

"Preachers are very much like other men, I believe," said Mr. Eldridge. "For instance," he added, merrily, glancing at their work, "they like green peas and currant pies about as well as anybody else, and you know they always have a weakness for fried chickens."

"Oh, I guess we'd git along with the eatin' part," said Miss Prudy, laughing herself, "and on the whole I don't know of no reason why you shouldn't stay here as well as anywhere. I'll show you the best room I could give you, and if you like it, why we'll settle the case to-night."

She rose, put aside her pan of peas, and led the way to a wide, cool, southeast chamber, which overlooked the village from the front windows, and the garden and a green, fertile slope of country from the side ones.

He was delighted with it, and the prospect of quiet, uninterrupted study it offered, and so they soon concluded the arrangement, and the young minister returned to the village to superintend the removal of his worldly effects immediately.

"Humph!" observed Miss Prudy to Bettie as he departed, "wonder he wants to git away from them Smiths! 'Taint only the room, but she ain't no kind of a cook, and I'd love to see the man that could write sermons among them seven noisy young ones!"

"He is very pleasant, but it almost frightens me to think of his being here all the time," said Bettie.

"Humph! I guess he won't hurt you! Now, child, you just tend to them currant pies, and I'll go put up some fresh curtains, and fix up his room a little. Mind you make the pies sweet enough. Men's always fond o' sweet things."

With which wise observation Miss Prudy went off to "fix up" the parson's room, already as neat as human hands could make it. And pretty Bettie, her brown curls tucked up smoothly under her comb, the sleeves of her pink calico dress pinned above her dimpled elbows, plucked her shapely little hands into the snowy flour, and was soon deep in the mysteries of currant pies for the parson's dinner.

When it became known in Millville that the young parson had selected Miss Petticoord's quiet home for a boarding place, there was quite a commotion of tongues—feminine ones especially.

Miss Samantha Mills had supposed of course he would come to them, and had already be-

gun a set of mats for his room. Abby West was preparing to give up her own apartment to him, and all the mammas with marriageable daughters were very much surprised, and quite free with their comments.

"I suppose Betty Porter will be setting her cap for Mr. Eldridge now," remarked Samantha Mills to Ellen Lockman, Betty's intimate friend.

Ellen gave Samantha a flash from her black eyes, and answered, "No, she leaves that for those who are too homely to attract anybody without trying."

Abby West made a spiteful frown at Betty, too, but Ellen had too much good sense to worry her friend by repeating them, so pretty Betty pursued her quiet way unconscious that she was the object of everybody's jealousy.

Miss Prudence perceived the discord, but she only gave a grim smile, and said not a word.

As for Betty, she was very shy of the young minister for the first few weeks, never speaking to him when she could avoid it. But there was a little cabinet organ in Miss Prudence's parlor, and Betty played very nicely. So Mr. Eldridge, being a great lover of music, began to drop into the parlor evenings to listen to her, and gradually they fell into a quiet friendship.

So quiet, however, that even Miss Samantha's lynx eyes failed to make any discoveries in her frequent calls. She was always calling to present some offering of her own graces. And not only she, but a host of the other feminine members, with slippers, or handkerchiefs, or cuffs, or collars, or pincushions, or something, "just as if," Miss Prudy indignantly ejaculated, "the man had nothing in the world, no sense enough to get anything."

At last it rained one Sunday evening, and Mr. Eldridge took Betty Porter home under his umbrella.

And the next morning the commotion broke out! Early to Miss Petticoord's came Miss Samantha, armed with her usual offering, a pair of slippers this time. And as Mr. Eldridge was not at home, she left them to Miss Prudence to deliver, and betook herself to Betty's parlor.

Betty was practicing a new song, "The Little Brown Church in the Vale."

"Ah, new music! Where did you get it?" questioned Miss Samantha.

"Mr. Eldridge gave it to me," answered Betty, meekly.

"Ah, did he? I hear he walked home with you last night," pursued Miss Samantha.

"It was raining, you know, and we live at the same place," explained Betty.

And Miss Prudence, coming in, sat down grimly and said nothing.

"Yes, that accounts for it," admitted Miss Samantha. "I hope, Betty, as you are young and inexperienced, you won't allow yourself to be led away by any polite attentions Mr. Eldridge may show you. The church do think that it would be much better for our minister if he was a married man."

"I think so, too—for him," interrupted Miss Prudence, significantly.

"We all do," said Miss Samantha, impressively. "Pa told me this morning that the deacons intend to call on him this afternoon, and advise it. But of course they expect his choice will be some sensible, attractive person, suitable for a minister's wife."

"That rules all old maids like you and me out," suggested Miss Prudy.

Miss Samantha colored, but she knew Miss Petticoord too well to attempt a passage at arms with her, so she only tossed her head as she rose to go, and remarked: "She presumed Brother Eldridge would make his own selection."

"I presume he will, if he makes any," was Miss Prudy's dry response.

After Miss Mills was gone and Mr. Eldridge had returned home, Miss Petticoord took the slippers and went to his room.

"There!" she cried, flinging them on his table, "there's another pair! They must think you have as many feet as a thousand-legged worm! There's the pair with beads on 'em, and the pair worked with green snakes, and a pair last week with red dogs worked on 'em, and another with blue parrots on, and here's another with yaller cats on! If they'd throw in a few pairs of boots, you might set up a shop. Bah!"

The young minister threw back his head, and laughed long and loud.

"Oh, you needn't laugh," persisted Miss Prudy. "I've had a visitation this morning, and you're going to have one this afternoon."

"I met Deacon Mills as I came up, and he intimated as much to me. I wonder what's in the wind!" asked Mr. Eldridge.

"I can tell you. They want you to marry."

"Oh, they do! Well, it might be a good thing."

"You see, you committed a crowning sin last night, because you took Betty under your umbrella out of the rain."

"Oh, that's it, is it? Well, Miss Prudence, we'll just let the good deacons come."

"I shan't prevent 'em!" declared Miss Prudy, as she marched down stairs to get her dinner.

In due season the deacons came, and were in council with the minister a long time.

When they were gone Mr. Eldridge walked down into Miss Prudy's little sitting room and seated himself on the edge of the big table where she was at work.

"I've had my visitation," said he.

"Well, you've lived through it, I see," observed Miss Prudy.

"Oh yes! But they are bound to marry me, out of hand."

"Well!" observed Miss Prudy, again.

"I told them I had been thinking of that matter for some time."

"Well!" observed Miss Prudy, a third time.

"And I told them when my choice was made I would let them know. But I should require my own time to consider."

"Did they suggest anybody?" asked Miss Prudy, at last.

Mr. Eldridge laughed. "Oh, that would be telling!" he said. "But, Miss Prudy, if I ever do marry my choice has been made this long time. Will you give her to me?"

"Me!" asked Miss Prudy, laying down her work.

"Yes, you. Will you give me Betty?"

Miss Prudy looked keenly into his face.

"Harry Eldridge, do you know just what—just all you are asking?"

"Yes, Aunt Prudy, if I may say so; I think, in all earnestness, I do. I have loved Betty a long time. May I have her?"

"Have you spoken to her?"

"Not a word, as yet."

"Well, she's in the parlor. Go see what she says about it, and then come back to me."

The young minister obeyed. What Betty said will appear in the development of the story.

It had been the custom in Millville, when a new minister was settled, to invite the deacons and their families to take tea with him,

and all the church members for the evening, as a sort of "home-coming."

Miss Prudy, for reasons of her own, had not yet followed this custom, though she knew not a few remarks had been made regarding the omission.

No one was surprised therefore, when, a few weeks after the "visitation" of the deacons, it was given out from the pulpit one Sunday morning that on Wednesday evening Miss Prudence Petticoord would expect all the deacons and their families to take tea at her house, and that all other members and friends were cordially invited to come in and spend the evening.

Great preparations were made, and before Wednesday, word somehow dropped round that Mr. Eldridge expected a college friend from a distant town to visit him, and that he would be at the "preacher's party."

Two young ministers formed an unusual attraction for Millville, and all the young ladies did their best to be as killing as possible.

Samantha Mills and Abby West, being deacons' daughters, of course went to tea.

As they went in they met Ellen Lockman going upstairs with a large bundle pinned up in paper.

"What, you here now?" asked Samantha.

"Yes, I came to help Betty and Miss Prudy get supper," returned Ellen, shortly, for Miss Mills was not a favorite with her.

She went her way, and the ladies taking off their things in another upper room, saw her put her bundle in Betty's room, and hasten downstairs again.

"Let's peep in and see what she had," suggested Abby West, and the two slyly opened the door of Betty's room. Ellen's bundle lay on the bed, but beside it was a new, snow-white dress, spread daintily over the white coverlet.

"Oh, my! Betty's got a new white dress!" said Miss Mills, lifting the folds to look closer.

"Yes! and she thinks she'll come out in it next Sunday and surprise us all. Isn't this pretty lace?" I didn't know Miss Prudy could afford to dress her so fine!" commented Abby.

"Let's see what is in Ellen's bundle," said Miss Mills, beginning to busy her fingers with the pins. But just then footsteps were heard on the stairs, and they beat a hasty retreat.

And when, half an hour later, they found another opportunity to slip upstairs and satisfy their curiosity, the door of Betty's room was locked, fast and tight.

Of Miss Prudy's supper we have not time to tell, but it was a grand success in the culinary line. The young minister and his friend, Mr. Morris, were the centers of attraction. After supper a goodly number began to gather in, and quite a lively party was soon in progress.

After a while some music was called for, and Betty was wanted to play. But Betty was nowhere to be found. Neither was Ellen Lockman. Neither was the young minister, nor Miss Prudy.

Somebody else began to play, however, and but little curiosity had been excited, when Miss Prudy came in. She crossed the room and said a few words to Mr. Eldridge's friend, Mr. Morris, and then seated herself.

Mr. Morris rose and addressed the company: "Ladies and gentlemen—you have gathered this evening to witness an interesting ceremony, which, with your permission, will now proceed."

He stepped forward to the center of the room as he spoke, and lo! at the parlor door entered Betty, in the identical white dress, leaning upon the arm of the young minister, followed by Ellen Lockman, in another dress almost exactly like Betty's, leaning on Mark Frazer's arm.

The young couple advanced in front of Mr. Morris, Mark and Ellen ranging themselves as attendants, and in a moment more the astonished company realized that the young parson had taken the deacons' advice, and was about to be married.

Miss Samantha turned pale as death, and Miss Abby West was as red as a beet. But Miss Prudy looked around, grimly triumphant. And no one, looking in the daisy-faces of the pretty bride, could doubt that the Millville parson made a wise choice.

DEADLY-EYE, The Unknown Scout: OR, THE BRANDED BROTHERHOOD.

BY BUFFALO BILL,
THE CELEBRATED SCOUT, GUIDE, AND HUNTER—
AUTHOR.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BATTLE WITH THE BROTHERHOOD.
DASHING rapidly on, under the guidance of the Unknown Scout, the squadron of cavalry, after a ride of ten miles, struck the trail where Ricardo and his men had turned back in their chase after the two fugitives.

After carefully examining the traces, Deadly-Eye reported the outlaws about thirty strong, and with a cheer the troopers dashed on, until the Unknown Scout suddenly drew rein, where a larger trail was visible.

"Here is another trail of fully a hundred horsemen, and they have followed on after Ricardo. Ah! I have it, they are the band of Dog Soldier Sioux under the desperado Red Dick. General, can I offer some advice?"

"Assuredly, Scout. Our success in this affair depends upon you."

"Well, sir, I would say dispatch half a dozen men at once back to the fort for another squadron of horse, so that we can be able to manage both of these bands, and follow Ricardo to his retreat."

"Good! We'll make a ten-strike of him this time, and it will be a feather in our cap to rid the country of such a desperate renegade. Lieutenant Ainslie, take four men with you, return to the fort, and tell Captain Cassidy to come on at utmost speed with his company, and see also that you bring fresh horses and rations."

Away darted the lieutenant, while a halt was called, and the horses were allowed to rest, but the Unknown Scout determined to push on at once, alone, and reconnoiter; so, telling the general he would return if he discovered the exact whereabouts of the enemy, he rode away, and soon disappeared behind a roll in the prairie.

For a few miles Deadly-Eye continued on, Prairie Gull creeping up steadily, in a sweeping and untiring gallop; then he suddenly drew rein, for the distant crack of a rifle broke on his ear.

Cautionally advancing, Deadly-Eye soon reached a roll of the prairie higher than ordinary, and, knowing that he could obtain an extensive view from its summit, he dismounted, and leaving Prairie Gull to await him, he advanced until he could see for miles before him.

Then, quite to his surprise, he beheld a small timber-island, and around it, just out of rifle range, were fully two hundred Indians.

Taking a small field-glass from his pocket, he soon discovered that the timber hid a number of horsemen, who had taken refuge there from their Indian foes.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, as he turned his glass upon the Indian besieging-party. "Ah! Ricardo; you are in a trap, and Red Dick holds the winning hand. Well, so much the better for the troops. Ah! Ricardo, your days are numbered now, and mine must be the hand to tear from you your worthless life."

After a longer examination of the motte and the surrounding band, the Scout returned to his horse, mounted and rode rapidly back, arriving at the cavalry encampment just as Captain Cassidy and Lieutenant Ainslie arrived with about sixty more men.

Reporting his discovery to the general, Deadly-Eye continued:

"And now, sir, I think as soon as the horses are a little rested we had better push on. You have a hundred fighting men now, and we can defeat the two forces combined."

"You do not think that the two men, now enemies, will join against us, do you, Scout?"

"I do, general; the necks of both men are in the hangman's noose, and, knowing that they cannot singly meet your force, they will join their thieving bands and make common war upon you."

"Well, we will give them a supper of cold lead and steel by dark. Come, gentlemen, we must be on the move."

On swept the cavalcade over the prairie, and when the sun was low in the horizon they came up to the higher roll of the prairie, where a short halt was ordered.

"They are at it, hot and fast," said the Scout, as the sound of rapid firing reached their ears.

"Now, general, let me suggest that you divide the troops into three parties, you leading the center with about forty men, Captain La Clyde taking the right with twenty-five men, Captain Cassidy the left with a like number, and at about a mile distant from Captain La Clyde. With your permission I will then take the remaining half-dozen troopers and the three hunters, and making a circuit of four miles will come out upon the prairie at a point far to your right, and at once advance toward the motte. When the Indians catch sight of me they will at once send out a larger force to fight me, and then you had better charge with your three squadrons."

"Splendidly planned, Scout; you should have entered the army!" cried the general, and he at once gave the necessary orders, and in ten minutes more, with the roll of the prairie still hiding them, the four parties were taking up their respective positions.

From their points of view the officers then saw Deadly-Eye suddenly emerge upon the prairie. At once his presence created an excitement in the Indian besieging ranks.

But boldly on rode the little band of a dozen men, and as Deadly-Eye had said, out rode a party to meet and give them battle, while their main attack upon the motte did not cease in vigor.

Rapidly the two parties approached each other—the Indians surprised at the boldness of the little band. Then broke forth across the prairie the wild and thrilling war-cry of the Unknown Scout, and over the roll of land, from three different points, bounded the cavalry squadrons, their regular cheers striking terror to the dusky besiegers of the motte.

Instantly there was a cessation of hostilities between the Indians and Branded Brotherhood, and out from the motte bounded the iron-gray of the outlaw chief, his master upon his back, and, waving a white handkerchief, he approached a central point from whence another horseman emerged to meet him.

Presently the two met upon the plain; the parley between them was excited and brief, and Ricardo returned to his motte, and Red Dick to his Indians, who at once broke in wild confusion and made for the motte.

"It is as I thought; they have joined forces," cried the Scout, and raising his voice to its highest pitch he sent it across the prairie in one of his terrible war-cries.

"Ride men, ride! Press them into their den! Press them home and the game is ours!" A cheer answered the Scout's words, and, driving their spurs into their horses, the troopers bounded on in hot pursuit, closing up upon their foes in deadly earnest.

At length the band of Indians, under Red Dick, reached the motte, and rallying around the nearest trees, turned to fire upon the advancing cavalry, the stern voice of Ricardo giving forth his orders in a cool and decided manner.

But the Scout gave them no time to form a solid line, for ahead of the other three squadrons he dashed on with his little band right into the timber, and instantly a hot firing was heard.

Almost immediately after, the squadron of Percy La Clyde struck the timber, then followed the general and Captain Cassidy and their troopers.

Attacked thus from four points, and without time to rally, the Indians broke and fled, in spite of the cries of Red Dick and Ricardo, who were determined to sell their lives dearly.

Through the motte like a fiery torrent swept the Unknown Scout and his band, crushing down many an Indian brave, and driving a mass of Indians pell-mell before his impetuous advance.

On, on, right for the spot where Ricardo coolly sat his horse, Red Dick, Long Dave, and Red Burke upon either hand, and his disciplined outlaws around him, determined to do or die.

"Here, accursed hound, you are my game," yelled the Unknown Scout, firing his revolver right and left, and dropping a foe at every shot, as he urged his horse on toward Ricardo.

But, though the Indians had broken upon every hand, and were flying madly through the timber, shot and cut ruthlessly down by the charging troopers, the brave band of the Branded Brotherhood still stood as firm as a rock, and met the attack with iron nerve.

Suddenly a tall trooper fell from his horse by the side of Deadly-Eye, and instantly his saber was seized by the Scout, who, with a series of wild war-cries, still pressed on toward Ricardo.

But, ere he reached the chief, Red Dick spurred forward to meet him, crying in his hoarse tones:

"Now, you cursed Scout, your time has come."

"You lie, Red Dick, you lie!" fairly shrieked Deadly-Eye, and with one mighty sweep of his saber he cut down through the neck and breast of the burly ruffian, crying:

"Take my second mark, Red Dick, though it cheats the gallow's of its due."

Quickly supporting the band of the Scout came Percy La Clyde and his troopers, and, the moment after, up dashed General Canton and half a dozen men, he having dispatched the remainder of his squadron, under Lieutenant Ainslie, and Captain Cassidy and his dragoons, in pursuit of the flying Indians.

The reinforcements, thus received by Deadly-Eye, caused the Branded Brotherhood to be outnumbered, and slowly they began to give ground.

Then, as if maddened because he could not break their ranks, Deadly-Eye bounded forward once more, and his saber having been broken by coming in contact with the rifle of Long Dave, he drew his keen knife, and with desperate thrusts of his cruel spurs, forced Prairie Gull forward until he faced Ricardo.

"Now, Captain Carleton, it is your life or mine!"

"In Satan's name, who are you that knows me!" cried the outlaw chief, his face turning ghastly pale, as he reined back his iron gray mare upon her haunches.

"I am the son of Nellie Carleton!" almost shrieked the Scout.

"Great God!"

As the outlaw chief uttered the cry, his reins fell from his nerveless hand, and his mare would have bounded away, had not Deadly-Eye seized the bridle and hurled her back with cruel force, while, spurring still nearer to his enemy, he raised his glittering knife and drove it deep into the bosom of the man whose life he had sworn to take.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the Unknown Scout, as, with a smothered cry, the chief fell to the ground. Bounding over the prostrate form the next instant Deadly-Eye seized Red Burke in his powerful arms, and dragged him from the saddle.

"Here, La Clyde, this fellow shall not cheat the gallow's," he cried, and two troopers instantly seized the ruffian, while the remainder of the outlaws broke in wild confusion, and darted away to seek safety in flight.

But avenging foes were upon their track, and ere darkness settled upon the scene, many had fallen beneath the pistols and sabers of the troopers.

At length night came on, and the sounds of suffering were heard in the motte, for around a large camp-fire the troopers had placed the wounded.

At another fire, near by, stood General Canton and his officers, discussing the battle, and wondering at the absence of Deadly-Eye, who, when last seen, was in hot pursuit of the flying renegades.

But the night crept on, midnight rolled around, and yet the Unknown Scout came not, and anxious fears filled the hearts of all regarding his safety.

CHAPTER XIII.

A STARTLING REVELATION.

IN that motte, there on the wild plain, few cared to seek sleep, with the dead and wounded everywhere around them! General Canton and his officers still sat around the camp-fire, though midnight had come and gone.

Presently the sound of rapidly advancing hoof-beats was heard, the sentinel challenged, and the answer came in the stern, deep voice of the Unknown Scout.

ther officer stationed in the same fort with him.

"Dismissing her, for he cared not for the young girl, his crime was found out, and the almost heart-broken father sought revenge for the disgrace upon his child, and was slain in a duel at the hands of the man who had already brought untold sorrow upon him.

"Dismissed from the service, Ricardo Carleton then leagued himself with robbers, roaming over the western and south-western plains for years, until at length he became the leader of the Branded Brotherhood. Have I truly told you life, Ricardo?"

"You know all," sadly replied the chief, and then he continued: "What became of my brother, and his child, for it was stolen from the person I left it with?"

"After several years your almost broken-hearted brother married a young girl who had nursed him through the long illness that followed his discovery of the death of his wife; and, convinced in his own mind that you had done the foul deed, though he would not betray you, he took the maiden name of his wife, which was that of Carter, and moved still further into the western wilds, until a few years ago he settled not very far from here; and Alfred Carter, the man whom you slew, whose second wife you murdered, whose son fell by your hand, and whose daughter you carried in captivity to your stronghold, intending to make her your victim, was your brother, your own kindred."

"Oh, God! what a judgment has overtaken me!"

"I rescued Rose Carter from your power, and have brought upon you your ruin."

"Who are you, friend of Satan, who are you?" almost shrieked the chief.

"I will tell you. You carried me, for I was the little son of your brother, to one whom you deemed your friend. At that time the man was your very slave, but, in a fit of anger, you one day struck him, and kicked from your path his little child, and he hated you, for that kick proved fatal. From that day I was trained up to know and hate you too, until my kind benefactor and his wife, for they were kind, notwithstanding the evil lives they led as your agents for the sale of stolen goods, moved to the East, to live on the money they had accumulated."

"In an eastern State I lived until my eighteenth year, receiving the best education that money could bestow, and then my adopted parents lost their lives in a collision upon a railroad, and I was left alone, with a few thousand dollars they still had left."

"From papers in the possession of your enemy, I found out all I would know, and westward I came, and devoted my life to becoming a thorough scout and plainsman, and that I succeeded you can well judge."

"Determined to track you to the bitter end, and slay you for the murder of my mother, I followed you across the prairies by day and night, to, in the end, find that you had become the slayer of my father, my stepmother and brother, and had dragged my half-sister to your den to bring dishonor upon her."

"Nay, Ricardo Carleton, I have more to say, for I would have you know that the young girl whom you brought ruin upon, and whose father you slew, went forth in the world with her babe, and ere many years became the wife of a horrid brute—one whom this night I sent to his long account, and who once before I marked, when years ago he attacked me for interfering when he was beating that poor, lonely woman."

"He had settled himself not far from Kansas City, and one night I stopped at his cabin, and then it was, in a fit of anger, he struck the woman whose life you had wrecked."

"Infuriated with my interference, he, the next day, killed the sorrowing woman, and fled to these wilds, to soon become known as a desperado and renegade from his people, the leader of a band of thieving, murdering Dog Soldiers Sioux."

"The son, whose life you dishonored, was cast upon the world, and living at one time among the Indians, at another in the cities, earning at all times a precarious living, he grew to manhood, a fit heir to his father's crimes, for only this night, from your negro servant, who from boyhood to manhood has followed you, and participated in many of your evil deeds, did I find out really who that son was, although a suspicion of the truth has of late flashed over me; and now hear me, Ricardo Carleton. As I tracked you to death so will I hunt down your son, for he has committed against one whom I love a deadly sin, one who took care of me when wounded and sick, I laid for weeks in an Indian wigwam."

Without another word the Scout arose and walked away from the camp-fire, and only the groans of the chief broke the silence; but, whether most from pain of body or mind none knew, for he never spoke again, and with his head supported in the arms of the negro Buttermilk, who had so faithfully followed his master's evil fortunes, his breath grew shorter and more labored, until, with a curse half-uttered upon his lips, Ricardo, the chief of the Branded Brotherhood, was dead.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 287.)

THOUGHTS FOR SATURDAY NIGHT.—It is but one step from companionship to slavery, when one associates with vice.

Active natures are rarely melancholy. Activity and melancholy are incompatible.

In life it is difficult to say who do you the most mischief—enemies with the worst intentions, or friends with the best.

To feel, think, hope. A man is sure to dream enough before he dies, without making arrangements for the purpose.

Whatever rouses the moral nature, whether it be danger or suffering, or the approach of death, banishes unbelief in a moment.

The height of earthly promotion and glory lifts us up no whit nearer heaven. It is easier to step there from the lowly vale of humiliation and sorrow.

"Mary," said a preacher, addressing a colored convert, "is not the love of God wonderful?" She replied: "I do not think it is so wonderful, because it is just like him."

Grace is glory militant and glory is grace triumphant; grace is glory begun, glory is grace made perfect; grace is the first degree of glory, glory is the highest degree of grace.

Generosity during life is a very different thing from generosity in the hour of death; the one proceeds from liberality and benevolence, the other from pride or fear.

True science, which is the knowledge of facts, and true philosophy, which is the knowledge of principles, are always allied to true religion, which is the harmony of the soul with facts and principles.

It is a good and safe rule to sojourn in every place as if you meant to spend your life there, never omitting opportunity of doing a kindness or speaking a true word, or making a friend. Seeds thus sown by the wayside often bring forth abundant harvest.

OLIO.

BY HAP HAZARD.

How full of music must they be
Who first see light in Italy!
A younger son of royalty
Has traveled far, by land and sea,
To lay his sweet melody
Down at the feet of you and me,
Appreciative since we be
Of those soft strains of melody
That issue from the box that he,
Upon his back, so jauntily,
From house to house, o'er hill and lea,
Delights to bear, that great and wee
May feast their souls in ecstasy
On dulcet notes (in any key)
Of strange, celestial harmony!
And this—ah! this, as air, is free!
The simple privilege craves he—
Without a price, without a fee—
To plume his fancy's wings and flee
Up in the blue impetuosity!

Ah! son of old royalty,
If I was sure that none would see,
For thy sweet strains, right cordially
I'd like to shy a stone at thee!

The starting tear, oh why compare
To diamond or to pearl!

'Tis brighter far—'tis purer far—
Than tawdry gems, sweet girl!

The small, clear, were nearer true,
Were 't likened to a drop of dew!

Love in a Maze:

THE DEBUTANTE'S DISENCHANTMENT.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLET.

AUTHOR OF "ALIDA BARRETT, THE SEWING-GIRL," "MADELINE'S MARRIAGE," ETC.

CHAPTER IX.

A STRANGE CONFESSION.

DILIGENT inquiry convinced both the lawyers that the claims advanced by Richard Lumley were but too well founded. They were waited on by his attorneys, Seth Blake & Co., with unquestionable proofs of his identity, and of his relationship to the deceased. Letters in her handwriting were produced. The history of Claude Hamilton was also proven; that he was only the adopted son of Mrs. Hamilton, and therefore of no kin to Mrs. Stanley. The law allowed him none of her property unless it were bequeathed to him; and no will was forthcoming. The one drawn up by Sherman they were obliged to believe consumed with the rest of Mr. Hall's papers at the time of the fire. That which Mr. Reynolds had prepared, and had seen executed, Mrs. Stanley must have destroyed with her own hands, after reflection.

The lawyer obeyed her strict injunction not to disclose its provisions; he only said it was not in her nephew's favor, and might have done him little good. No doubt she had destroyed it for his sake, and wished it forgotten.

Hamilton felt the blow severely; for he had loved his aunt, and believed himself the first object in her affections. To find that he had no claims of kindred blood, and that the latest will had in fact disinherited him, after her many assurances that he should be her heir, sorely wrung his heart. He had depended on her promises, and had taken no care of his future. Now he must gird on his armor to fight the battle of life. He subdued all useless regrets, in the endeavor to do it manfully. Richard Lumley, meanwhile, had taken possession of the house. His lawyers had not yet settled the preliminaries to his taking out letters of administration. But there was no one to dispute his rights. He established himself in the best bedchamber; that in which his sister had died; and filled the rooms he occupied with the odors of tobacco and bad whisky. His low associates came every evening to eat and play at cards with him; and coarse guffaws of laughter, and drunken yells, were heard instead of the music that had once awakened the echoes. The servants were disgusted, and one and all, resolute to leave the house; but Sherman requested them to stay till matters were decided.

One morning the lawyer was seated in the private room, in the rear of his office, when one of his clerks informed him a lady requested an interview.

"A lady?"

"Yes, sir; a young lady; at least I judge so from her figure and voice. She came in a carriage, with a coachman in livery."

"You may show her in here," said Sherman—who happened to be at leisure.

A tall, slight figure, closely veiled, entered, and took the seat placed for her accommodation. There was silence for a moment.

The lawyer began, politely, to inquire her business, by asking what he could do for her. She threw back her veil and loosened the cloak that covered her black dress.

"Miss Weston! is it possible? I am happy to see you! I have been really anxious about you!"

He took both her hands, and looked into her wan, sad face.

"You have been ill!" he exclaimed. "I heard that you had gone away with a friend; but I had not heard of your illness."

"Mr. Sherman," the girl began, in the cold, calm tones to which she had schooled herself, "I have come here to make a confession."

"A confession! What can you have to confess, my poor child?"

Olivia rose to her feet. She was trembling, but she steadied herself by grasping the arms of the chair. The words rushed from her lips almost without her consciousness.

"Mr. Sherman, I am the guilty one! I destroyed Mrs. Stanley's will!"

"It was the lawyer's turn to start up.

"Bless my soul! What is it you are saying?"

"I burned the will!"

"You?"

"Mrs. Stanley made me promise, before her death, to burn some California letters in a secret drawer of her cabinet. She gave me full directions, and put the keys in my hand. I promised her to destroy them before any one else could see them; I did it the night before the funeral."

"And you found her will, and burned it by mistake with the other papers! It was a terrible pity!"

"There was no mistake! The will was burnt first!"

"Do you mean to say you found the will, and deliberately destroyed it?"

"I did! I found first a letter addressed to myself, explaining her reasons for such a will. Then I looked for the will; I took it out of the drawer; I read it through!"

"You read it?"

"I read it carefully. It was the latest will. Mrs. Stanley had left everything to me; to me, except an annuity to Mr. Hamilton of five hundred dollars."

"Left everything to you!" repeated the astounded lawyer.

"Everything! She gave her reasons in the letter she had written to me."

"And then you—"

"The will was exactly as she had said it would be in her letter. I did not want her property; I would not receive it! I thought—I was sure—I had heard you say so—that Mr. Hamilton would inherit all if there were no will. I ran to the fire and threw the paper on it; I saw it burn to ashes!"

Mr. Sherman took to his habit in perplexity, of pacing the room.

"Then, as you know, I heard what that rough man said—that Mr. Hamilton was not the nephew—that he would inherit nothing! I ruined him! meaning to do him service! I deprived him even of the small annuity left to him! I want no pardon, sir, nor excuse, nor indulgence for what I did. I only want to know if I can do anything—even to the sacrifice of my life—to repair that cruel wrong!"

She wrung her hands piteously. Her eyes were fixed imploringly on her auditor.

"Bless my soul! I don't know—Stanley! have you the letter of Mrs. Stanley—the letter addressed to yourself?"

"No; I burned that letter first of all."

"The devil!"

The lawyer suppressed the imprecation that rose to his lips.

"But—but you read the will! You remember its contents?"

"There was a bequest of five hundred dollars to her nephew—Claude Hamilton—"

"Are you sure she called him her nephew?"

"Quite sure, sir."

"Any other small bequests?"

"None that I recollect. The rest of her property was bequeathed to me."

"With what purpose, or conditions?"

"None were named; none whatever."

"Stanley; what were the reasons she gave you privately in her letter?"

Olivia looked down, and a flush rose to her face.

"I would rather not say, sir, what was in that letter."

Sherman stopped short, facing her.

"Who were the witnesses to that will?"

"I did not notice, sir. It had been witnessed, and was under seal."

"Who was appointed executor?"

"I did not observe."

"Do you know the name of the lawyer who drew it up?"

"I do not, sir. I never knew."

The lawyer fixed his eyes sternly on the young lady's face.

"You will pardon me, Miss Weston, if I cannot credit so improbable a tale. You are not candid with me."

"How so, sir? I have spoken the simple truth; alas, to my shame and sorrow!"

"You refuse to reveal the contents of Mrs. Stanley's letter to yourself?"

It was a private letter, meant for my eyes only, I would not tell what it contained!"

"Certainly you are; if it threw light on the testator's intentions."

"Then you shall know all, sir. Mrs. Stanley had wished that I should marry her nephew. She said in the letter that there was no obstacle except my pride; that I would not marry one so much wealthier than myself. She was determined to remove that difficulty by making me rich."

It cost the girl pain to make this disclosure. She was surprised to see the suer of incredulity on the lawyer's face.

"I cannot credit this statement," he said, after a pause. "Do you know, Miss Weston, that in destroying a will, you have been guilty of a criminal act; have placed yourself in a position of danger?"

Olivia's looks were assent enough. Again she sunk into the chair, and hid her face in her spread hands.

"If you really burned a will, I believe it to have been that drawn out by myself, which was entirely in Mr. Hamilton's favor."

Olivia lifted up her face.

"What motive could I have had in destroying a will made in his favor?"

"I cannot tell. But what you tell me of Mrs. Stanley's letter is too absurd; it is utterly incredible."

"Then, sir, you believe me capable of having committed a crime to the injury of another, without any motive?"

"You say you wished to make Mr. Hamilton the heir! It was in your power to have restored his inheritance."

"But he would not have accepted it as a gift from me."

"Perhaps not. It is a pity, however, you did not give him the chance. You have muddled matters terribly as it is; and it is my impression that you destroyed the will that would have made him the master of all, according to Mrs. Stanley's intention."

Pale as death, but with the fire of indignation in her eyes, Olivia rose, and drew the cloak around her shoulders. As she moved toward the door, she turned for a last word with the lawyer.

"I have not deserved your cruel aspersions, sir," she said. "I have told you the simple truth. My rash act was for the good of Mr. Hamilton, and that I have injured him is my bitter punishment; how bitter, you can never know! I came to ask you if there were means of reparation. I am willing to go to prison, if that will undo the mischief. There is my address, laying down a card. If necessary, I will go into a court of justice, and swear to the truth of what I have said, and suffer the punishment."

She passed from the room, after lingering a moment for Mr. Sherman's reply. But he only bowed coldly in farewell. As the door closed behind her he resumed his walk through the room, plunged in a profound fit of musing.

An hour later young Hamilton came in. Orders had been given for his admission whenever he might come. He looked cheerful, notwithstanding the dark prospect.

Sherman told him what had passed and his own grave doubts.

The young man started up in astonishment.

He put down at once all question of the perfect truthfulness of the young lady. He described the scene at the bedside of his benefactress, when she had so strongly manifested her desire for a union between them.

"It was just like my dear aunt," he cried, "to resort to that romantic method of bringing us together. And it was like Miss Weston's chivalrous delicacy to destroy a will that put her in possession of my rights."

"Then you do not believe Miss Weston's statement?" asked the lawyer.

"I would pledge my life on her truth in anything she might say."

"And what do you suppose her real motive for the rash act?"

"Just what she said; her unwillingness to avail herself of my aunt's mode of enforcing her wishes. She would not accept a fortune on such implied conditions; she would not bestow her hand where her heart was not given; she would not wrong me by compelling me to receive from her bounty what was my right—at least I had been taught to think so."

"Then you do not believe Miss Weston would have willingly married you?"

"I do not," replied the young man after a pause, and looking down.

"Now it occurs to me, that the impulsive act, the girl's burning a will that gave her a fortune, and made her mistress of her destiny, could have been prompted only by a romantic love for you."

Claude's face was suddenly irradiated.

"You think so?"

"I feel sure of it. It is just what young ladies do in tales of romance."

"But hardly in real life. No, I can not flatter myself that she ever cared for me."

"By her own account the thing was done under sudden impulse. After reading the will she ran and threw it in the fire."

"In her generous eagerness to free me and free herself from an obligation. She little knew me to deem it necessary."

"Would you not have proposed to marry her?"

"To recover my fortune! Most assuredly not. If I loved a woman to desperation I would never become her suitor while such a contingency existed."

"Then you are as foolish as herself. Well, we must take a business view of the matter and see what we can do to remedy the difficulty."

"To remedy it! How can we do that?"

"Reynolds may have drawn up the will destroyed. If he did he will know the witnesses, and we may establish its contents yet."

"And its authority?"

"If the court so decides."

"And will it be necessary for Miss Weston to appear and bear testimony?"

"Certainly; we must prove how it is that the document is not forthcoming."

"I will not consent to that. I would rather suffer the loss."

"It is not a matter for your decision, my young friend. In fact, you have nothing to do with it. As the lawyers and advisers of the late Mrs. Stanley, trusted by her to fulfill her last wishes, it is our duty to prove them, and abide by them. If the court establishes the will, the fortune, remember, will not belong to you."

"That is true."

"And the alternative is the enjoyment of it by that scamp and ex-convict. Do you know he has taken full possession?"

"I suppose so."

"He sent the servant out for brandy the other night and I met him. He gave me a doleful account of the state of things. Lumley and his associates make the house a perpetual scene of beastly revelry, drinking and gambling every evening till half the night is over. The servants have all given warning."

"He has not yet taken out letters of administration?"

"No; but that makes no difference. There is no one to dispute his holdship. He'll make ducks and drakes of the money—as they say in my country—before the year's at an end. We must act promptly if we hope to dispossess him."

"I hope you will do so, with all my heart. The property will then go intact to Miss Weston."

"Five hundred dollars a year were left to you, my boy."

"That was kind considering I had no claim of kindred blood."

"And you will have the whole, if I understood the young lady aright."

"Never, sir. I would not, accept it as her gift, and I would not sue for the hand of a princess for the dowry she would bring me."

"Between you both, with your chivalrous notions, you may balk your aunt's intentions. She undoubtedly meant the result to be a union between you."

"She took the way to defeat it, had there been any chance before, of such a result."

"Well, my duty is plain. I must take steps at once and see Reynolds about it."

The two parted, Hamilton by no means in a happy frame of mind.

CHAPTER X.

RETURNING TO SOCIAL LIFE.

THE suit was commenced. With the testimony of Reynolds and the witnesses, as to the contents of the will, and that of Miss Weston, accounting for its destruction, the lawyers hoped to procure its establishment by the court.

Richard Lumley made a furious outbreak when notice was served upon him. The idea that any one should dare dispute his rights enraged him beyond expression, and he had reasons to dread the investigations into his past, which might be deemed necessary by the court. His counsel assured him, however, that no inquiry would be made into his antecedents. That question was not to be entered into.

The sole thing to be decided was whether or not the will destroyed was the last will and testament of the late Mrs. Stanley, and as such, would undoubtedly prove of its contents reestablish it in its legal authority? If so, then Lumley's claims were set aside; but Seth Blake and Company had several difficulties to throw in the way, and during "the law's delay" in settling the matter Lumley remained in undisputed possession.

Olivia went into court when summoned as a witness, with the firm spirit of a martyr. She was prepared to suffer any of the consequences of her rash deed, by which she had ruined the future of him she had striven to benefit. She would go to prison, she would plead guilty to an indictment, she would wear out her life in expiating her fault, if she only might undo the mischief.

Ruhama declared her intention of going with her, and standing by her during the trial. In vain Olivia implored that she would not; she might be compromised by her friendship for a self-confessed criminal. Even the prudent Emily St. Clare advised her not to go on the score of offending her husband; but she would listen to no remonstrance.

"My husband has left me to my own discretion," she would say, "and if he were here I should expect of a soldier and a gentleman that he would stand by a friendless girl, who has committed no fault, except being too generous and self-forgetful."

So the two ladies entered the court-room together, Tom Wyatt walking on the other side of Olivia, who declined taking his arm.

The brilliant Mrs. Marsh was greeted with a buzz of admiration. She wore a black velvet mantle, richly trimmed with gimpure lace and bead work, a black velvet hat and drooping plume, a rich collar, fastened with a large ruby brooch, and lavender kid gloves.

Olivia was in deep mourning. When she was called to the stand, and threw aside her crape veil, Ruhama also threw back the spotted thread lace one that had covered her face. Her rich color, her rippling waves of dark hair, her midnight eyes scintillating fire, and fastened upon the face of her friend, formed a contrast to the pale and worn, yet inexpressibly sweet face of the witness. Their manner, too, was in contrast. Mrs. Marsh

was anxious and restless, Olivia was dignified and composed. She had nerved herself to the worst, yet never had she appeared so much advantage as when thus prepared and resolved to criminate herself.

Her story was simply told and made a profound impression upon all present. When required to repeat the words of Mrs. Stanley urging a marriage between the son of her adoption and the young girl who had won her heart, her emotion was repressed with difficulty. The blood rushed to her face, and her lips quivered sadly; but she maintained her calmness, and did not hesitate in her answers.

The recital of the contents of the private letter from her benefactress to herself was another trying part of her testimony; but she went heroically through it all.

When she came to the burning of the will, the generous motive for which had been made apparent, the murmur of admiration would have burst into enthusiastic applause, had not the presiding judge firmly and promptly restrained its outbreak.

When

THE SAILOR'S DITTY.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

She is indeed the snuggest craft
With which I've ever spoken;
She is the fairest that one seas,
Shiver my timbers oaken!

I'd like to win her for my mate;
And I've an awful notion
To ask to consort her across
Life's boundless heaving ocean.

To think upon her I am taut,
And so my heart is spurred on—
My heart a vessel of first-class,
Nine hundred tonnage burden.

To her I am serenely bound,
And if I've got my bearing
I'm in the latitude of love,
And find it rather wearing.

She is the star I observe—
By which my course I'm steering;
The light-house on the shores of home
To which I'm fastly bearing.

Ain't she a pretty figure-head
To ornament a liner?
Tangle my ropes, I don't believe
You'll ever find a finer!

I harbor all good thoughts for her,
And I have got a cargo;
And all consigned to her, unless
They're under an embargo!

My heart goes throbbing like a buoy
Upon the billow's summit;
To know her truth I could not sound
By any line or plummet.

My love shall compass her about,
But ah, if she'd go veering,
My life would then be badly shorn,
And not be worth the sheering.

Or what, since I am but a tar,
If she'd be two-a-tartar?
Deep in the wave I'd dig my grave,
And die at last a martyr.

But I am right in reckoning
She's firm in any weather,
We'll sail the ship as long as I farm,
And land her both together.

LEAVES

From an Actor's Life;
OR,
Recollections of Plays and Players.

BY GEO. L. AIKEN.

XIV.—*The Spout Shop—The Way Actors are Made—The Old Loft—The Society—Putnam, Diamond, Danforth, Lampe and Stanton—My First Story—The Monthly Rose—How the Heroines were Played—The Carpet Warehouse—My First Appearance as Regular Actor—Howard and the Foxes—Cleveland Hall, Providence, R. I.*

My childish experience produced a natural result. I became desirous, as I grew older, of adopting the theatrical profession, and this feeling increased upon me as I grew older and larger.

I found among my boyish associates a number who were similarly inclined, and we formed a society, as it was then called, being the same as the amateur clubs of the present day. We hired an old loft at the junction of Charlestown and Medford streets, fitted it up with a stage and scenery, which was a combination of wall-paper and daubed cotton cloth ingeniously arranged, and borrowed all the spare wooden chairs we could obtain from our different households to accommodate the audience.

That audience consisted of the families and friends of the different members of the company, and after the first play was finished a hat was passed around among the audience to take up a collection to defray the expenses of this amusement, in the shape of rent, candles, etc.; and these collections were always sufficient for the purpose.

We called our theater the "Spout Shop," and here we indulged our histrionic tastes to our hearts' content.

Being considered the most experienced, though not the oldest, of the party, I was chosen manager. My *corps dramatique*—that was the way they phrased it in those days—consisted of William Putnam, Edward Danforth, Henry Lampe, William Stanton and William Diamond.

I give these names as every one of them afterward became an actor, and those who live, with the exception of Putnam, who is now engaged in sailmaking in Boston, or was when I last heard from him, are still "upon the boards." Danforth and Diamond are dead; both died young.

Diamond played George Shelby in my drama of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," at the National Theater, during a portion of its great "run" of three hundred nights there.

Danforth was my particular friend; "I loved him like a brother." He was the "paste-boy" in the *Boston Transcript* office, that would be called mending-clip now, I suppose; as it was his business to inclose in wrappers and address the papers sent to subscribers out of the city.

I made him an actor and he made me an author, for it was at his request that I wrote my first story. It came about in this way. His brother Henry was a printer in the *Transcript* office, one of the journeymen, and he and the other compositors started a little paper called the *Monthly Rose*. Edward Danforth contributed a poem—he had quite a degree of poetical talent, and I furnished a short tale, which I called "Squaw's Rock," for the first number.

Our productions were received with such favor that we continued to write for the *Monthly Rose* while it bloomed, and after it terminated its brief existence we tried our pens on the established weeklies, such as the *Uncle Sam*, *Yankee Blade*, *Flag of the Union*, *True Flag*, and the like, with success. Thus I became a contributor for the weekly press, and it is needless for me to state, I am still at it.

William Putnam was our tragedian, and his favorite character was "William Tell, the hero of Switzerland." I was the low comedian of the company, and I developed into a tragedian, according to an invariable rule in dramas. Lampe and Stanton were the personators of the female characters, and after it terminated do as they did in Shakespeare's time, and have our heroines represented by boys; and our boys were exceedingly skillful in their "make up," our strange visitors always insisting that they must be girls.

Our "Spout Shop" was kept up, though we changed its location to Haverhill street, for two winters, and then I drifted into the real theater, quite accidentally.

I was nearly seventeen years of age; I had left school before I was fourteen, and was employed in Geo. A. Brewer's carpet warehouse in Court street, where I had been for three years, and the smell of the painted carpets, in which we did a large business, appeared to affect my health.

My cousin, Caroline Fox, had married G. C. Howard, the since famous manager, and he had turned Cleveland Hall, in the city of Providence, R. I., into a theater, and had met with a most liberal patronage. I resigned my situation in the carpet warehouse, and accepted an invitation from him to visit him in Providence, with the understanding that I could act a little if I felt like it.

I went, remaining there some six weeks, until the end of the season, in fact, and acted all the time. This visit made me an actor. Here my career commenced. I made my first appearance in June—I have forgotten the exact date—1849, as "Ferdinand," in "Six Degrees of Crime," and I followed the profession I then adopted, with very little intermission, until 1871. In these twenty-two years I appeared in almost every city in the Union that has a theater, and in a great many that have not, playing sometimes in the dining-rooms of hotels, and the vestries of churches, and I wrote and had acted over seventy dramatic productions. Thus you will perceive that my life has not been an idle one.

The company at the Cleveland Hall Theater was quite a family affair. It was called "Howard and the Foxes." The two Fox brothers, with their sister Caroline, under the management of their mother, a woman of great energy and business tact, had, after their father's death, formed a profitable circuit of the small cities in the New England States, visiting them at stated periods, with an entertainment of singing, dancing (Caroline was an excellent dancer), and humorous dialogues, calling themselves the "Little Foxes." G. C. Howard married Caroline and joined them, and then the name was changed to "Howard and the Foxes." This name was retained even when they became a regular theater company in Providence.

When I joined the forces there, the company consisted of Mr. and Mrs. G. C. Howard, George, James and Charles Fox, Octavian Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Stone, Benson, and several others—"utility men"—whose names I cannot now call to mind.

I remember one that we always called "Bill Sticker," and I thought it was his right name, until one day he informed me in confidence that it was not.

"I stick up the bills, don't you see?" he explained. "I'm the bill-sticker, and they never call me anything else."

It was very simple, but I never knew him to get anybody to call him by any other name than the one which had been so aptly applied to him.

At the time that I became a member of the company, an uncle of mine—the one whom I was named after—Geo. H. Wyatt, brought a new play to Providence for production. The Mexican war was still fresh in the minds of the public, and it was a fruitful theme for novelists and dramatists.

This drama was entitled "The Battle of Buena Vista," and it was written by J. P. Adams, a dramatist of considerable merit, and a Yankee comedian, who walked zealously in the foot-prints of Dan Marble and Yankee Hill.

This new play was calculated to finish the season with *clat*, as the near approach of the Fourth of July would naturally excite patriotic feelings in every American breast.

It was duly rehearsed and carefully prepared, and then the public were invited to witness it. I shall have to reserve my account of its production until the next paper.

A Culinary Wife.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

MR. ALEMBER removed his hat very gallantly, and bowed and smiled at the little chocolate-lined phaeton and its two cream-white ponies went flashing by the hotel piazza; then he turned to Gus Rusling with a half-smile on his face.

"Well—what do you think of her? Pretty, isn't she, and undeniably stylish?"

Mr. Rusling's handsome eyes very plainly indicated his eager admiration.

"Pretty! you're the luckiest man in Christendom if you are the betrothed husband of such a little divinity. What's her name, Alembur?"

Mr. Alembur deliberately lighted his cigar before he answered.

"Don't be premature in your congratulations, Gus. Granted that Miss Weyburn is the little divinity you think her, I am not sure I shall ever aspire to the honor of her betrothed husband."

There was an air of such conscious dignity and importance in the gentleman's manner that Gus smiled amusedly.

"Upon my word, Alembur, one would think you had forgotten you had turned forty, to hear you talk so. Perhaps your mature attractions have failed to charm Miss Weyburn! I cannot conceive any other reason why you should not be the happiest of men in being the intimate friend you tell me you are."

Mr. Alembur had scowled, then allowed a benignant smile to lighten his face.

"I certainly am not a silly boy to fall in love with the first pair of bright eyes I see, Rusling; and, although it is perfectly true I have turned forty, I regard myself as a very suitable *parti* for Miss Weyburn—or any other lady I should honor."

His calm, severe dignity was irresistibly amusing, but Rusling smothered the laugh he felt was coming.

"I'll admit it all, old fellow—only do tell me the mental reservation you entertain regarding this peerless young goddess with her classic face and exclusive air!"

Mr. Alembur gazed serenely upon the gently-breaking surf, taking long, delicious inhalations of his cigar; then he leaned back in his chair, prepared to answer the solemn question, while young Rusling—handsome, attentive, semi-sarcastic, awaited the oracle.

"It is just here, Gus. A sweet voice, a beautiful face—a Hebe form are all very delightful, in their way. But, tell me what good it is to a husband to have his wife possess all those and other personal attractions if she is deficient in other respects—in those qualities that go to make up the true woman—the true wife—the true housekeeper?"

The half-jolly smile that had been hovering under Rusling's mustache, died slowly away under the serious earnestness of Mr. Alembur's words.

"I cannot think it possible that Miss Weyburn is minus the requisites you so rightly require. Give me an introduction, Alembur, and I'll give you my opinion more positively. Certainly, she is exteriorly the most lovely girl I have ever seen."

"Yes—fair—very fair to see."

"And a perfect lady in her deportment."

"I know it; Miss Weyburn comes of a good old family, to whom good breeding is as natural as to breathe."

"She plays most exquisitely, Alembur; and has a very pleasant voice."

Mr. Alembur nodded, gravely.

"You can't tell me anything I don't know, Gus, about Winnie Weyburn. I have made her my study for seven weeks, and I know she possesses all the charms you have mentioned, besides being remarkably well-informed on general subjects, a fascinating conversationalist, and possesses an even, amiable disposition."

Rusling's face grew almost angry as he wait-

ed to hear the gentleman out; then he impetuously questioned him.

"What in Heaven's name, then, do you want in a wife that Miss Weyburn does not possess? To serve you right, she should reject you if ever you conclude to honor her. I know I would consider myself only too happy to be the suitor of so charming a woman."

Mr. Alembur smiled gravely as he nodded his head slowly.

"You are twenty-five—and, as I said, capable of running mad over a pair of bewitching eyes, or a curl of golden hair. I am forty-two, and my heart can't gallop off with my common sense. There's the difference between us."

"And mighty glad I am of the difference," Gus returned, hotly, with a thrilling remembrance of Winnie Weyburn's sweet, ardent eyes, blue as the sky, that arched over her head, and the graceful, haughtily-poised head, and its vividly golden hair; then he banished the vision, and dropped his indignant tone.

"I confess to the most unmanly curiosity to know the one terrible defect that must exist in this young lady whom I thought fit to grace the President's parlor. What's the flaw in the jewel, Alembur?"

"You have partly mentioned it yourself, Rusling. Very undeniably, Miss Weyburn is admirably qualified to grace the parlor at the White House, or my house, or any other house that has a parlor. But, because she can ornament the parlor—is it to be deduced she can reign over the kitchen! Rusling, I like a good dinner; and—Winnie Weyburn cannot cook a beefsteak or make an omelet."

A second of deathly silence followed the mournfully tragic remark, delivered with a solemnity and truthfulness that was fatal to Gus Rusling's dignity. A flash of fire in his eyes—a smile on his lips—then a laugh—a series of laughs, hearty and earnest, that would have been infectious had any other than Mr. Alembur listened.

"Shades of Olympus! Alembur; you really mean to tell me you have the audacity to deliberate about proposing to the lady because she can't cook! And you—pretend to be in love!"

"I expect to have my meals served the same, married or single, in love or not." My wife must know how to accomplish that very desirable result."

Gus laughed again; then frowned, as he thought of the blue eyes and brilliant hair.

"Since you think so much of your stomach, Alembur, take my advice and go down to Seacom and hire one of the empty villas there. The proficiency of the *chefs de cuisine* in that locality is world-famed. You can have an elegant little cottage ready furnished, and enjoy yourself finely."

Whether Mr. Rusling had any selfish policy at stake, and intended to improve the opportunity by cultivating Miss Weyburn's acquaintance; whether Mr. Alembur really considered the attractions offered at Seacom paramount to those at Ocean Edge, cannot matter. Suffice it that that day week saw the departure of a middle-aged, portly, good-looking gentleman from the shore, with a lot of luggage marked, "A. A., Eglantine Villa, Seacom, N. J."

It was a delightful little spot, a few hundred feet back from the seashore, with tastily laid out grounds surrounding it like a dainty casket surrounds a jewel. And a jewel of a house it was, with its vine-covered piazzas, and low-curtained bay-windows, through which Mr. Andrew Alembur caught a glimpse of cool, rattan furniture, gleaming marble mantels, and brilliant scarlet-and-cream striped Indian matting.

"A very neat place, indeed," he said to himself, as he went through the rustic gate, and walked with the slow, pompous step he thought befitting the lessee and occupant of such a charming place.

"A very desirable place, and really quite a bargain; although the agent assured me the accommodations were first-class. Ah, I see my coming was expected; there is a smell of dinner. Really, the agent has been very kind to see to all this."

He paused half-way up the path to break off a sprig of verbena for his button-hole; then, continuing, went on up to the veranda, and through the open door into the silent, cool drawing-room on the left.

"Very nice—very nice, indeed," he thought, as he walked softly around, rubbing his hands in his extreme satisfaction, as fragrant odors of roasted lamb and St. Julian soup were wafted to his refreshment.

Across the marble-floored hall was the sitting-room—small, snug, cosy.

"This is just the thing. I'll make myself at home here; it shall be my smoking-room, and I'll have Rusling down here to thank him over our cigars for having recommended Seacom to me. Sad dog, that Gus Rusling! I'm not sure I would have left Ocean Edge to him and Winnie, unless I had been pretty sure she was about off for a visit to a classmate. How delicious that soup smells—hardly enough tomato, perhaps; and I do hope the cook will know her business well enough to make the lamb gravy brown."

And amid such reflections, and the blue haze of the cigar smoke, Mr. Alembur dropped off into a delicious dreamy reverie.

A pretty little woman, with eyes the color of a chestnut-shell—glossy and demure; a mouth all curves and as red as a ripe strawberry; smooth brown hair tucked into a net; sleeves rolled up over round, brown wrists; and a big white apron almost from chin to toes. Certainly a very unexpected apparition to appear to Mr. Alembur, as he started up from his doze, at the rustle of her garments. Of course he had expected somebody to come to him—and a woman at that; but certainly he had understood the house-agent to say the housekeeper was an old woman, and here—this fresh, demure, half-roguish young girl. However, Mr. Alembur's native gallantry and self-possession did not desert him.

"Oh—so you are Jane Eliza—I think the house-agent said Jane Eliza?"

A little courtesy as she answered:

"No, sir. My name is—is—Catherine, if you please."

"Oh! Catherine, eh? Well, I suppose he made a mistake, that's all. So you're the cook, Catherine?"

"The housekeeper, if you please, sir. The cook is dishing the dinner now, and I came to take your orders."

Mr. Alembur rubbed his hands gently. This was fine—a delicious repast awaiting him; a pretty housekeeper, and a repetition of both repast and housekeeper for an indefinite time, *ad futurum*.

So he gave his orders with a grandiloquent air, and had dinner sent in at once; eating and drinking to his heart's content while Catherine waited upon him.

"A very good dinner indeed—I never tasted better; give me as good every day, and I'll find no fault. And don't forget about the sugared pineapple and ice-cream about nine o'clock this evening."

He folded his napkin carefully and put the wide silver band around it; then lighted his cigar, and, instead of adjourning to the room opposite to enjoy it, seated himself beside the window, and watched Catherine remove the dishes.

"You've got a good cook—a first-class cook, Catherine. Is she colored? What's her name? I'd like to see her."

A little flitting smile came to her eyes that instantly vanished.

"While, sir. Yes, a very thoroughly accomplished cook. She will surprise you with the ice-cream."

And left to himself, Mr. Alembur thought what a jolly thing it was to hire Eglantine Cottage, and keep house. Then, when Catherine had left no traces after her of that dainty meal, the gentleman betook himself to a walk around the grounds, to pleasantly while away the hours until dusk.

It was just in the twilight when he re-entered the drawing-room through the open French window; and a familiar voice welcomed him.

"Well, old fellow, you are domesticated where I least expected to find you. Why didn't you tell me you were acquainted with Miss Merle?"

Mr. Alembur seized Rusling's extended hand cordially.

"Bless my heart, Gus, are you here? Welcome to Eglantine Cottage, my humble domicile, and all that sort of stuff! What train brought you over to see me?"

Gus stared at him in mute surprise.

"I am in a quandary—or else you are, Alembur. Did I understand you this was Eglantine Cottage—your bachelor hall? I supposed it was Vine Villa, where Miss—where a friend of mine is visiting, Miss Merle."

"It's simply a mistake on your part, Gus. You'll probably find Vine Villa somewhere in the vicinity. Just ring that bell there, will you? We'll have lights."

The summons was answered and the lamps lighted, disclosing—not Catherine, in her neat calico dress and white apron, but a fashionably-attired young lady, with a demure merriment in her tender brown eyes as she looked at Alembur, who regarded her as if she had been a ghost.

"I found it inexpedient to continue the maneuvers longer, Mr. Alembur. I am Miss Kathie Merle, and this is Vine Villa; it has only been a very amusing mistake. May I hope you will pardon me if I have offended you?"

Alembur turned red, and white, in one breath; then looked helplessly at Rusling, who began to see through it.

"Alembur—you've taken possession of the wrong cottage. Miss Merle, I suppose Miss Weyburn is with you?"

Kathie laughed.

"Oh, yes. Mr. Alembur can testify to that, since he was so delighted with the dinner she prepared for him. Winnie is a splendid cook, certainly."

Rusling's eyes were twinkling with fun, as he witnessed the gentleman's discomfiture.

"Miss Weyburn cooked my dinner! Great heavens! and I thought you were a servant! What an—fool I have been!"

And, as Winnie came in, in a bewitching toilet of white muslin, and bowed respectfully to him, then giving Rusling a greeting warm welcome could not be mistaken, Alembur knew he had discovered, too late, the one qualification he supposed lacking in the fair girl Gus Merle won in after days.

And Eglantine Cottage stood empty that season; while its lessee vanished from the scene of his mistake.

Heroes of History.

Captain Cook, the Great Navigator.

BY LAUNCE POYNTE.

ALL the world has heard of Captain Cook, and has a vague idea about his voyages and discoveries in the Pacific; but few are aware what a thoroughly heroic life was his, in his earnest devotion to science. Like all heroes, he was a hard worker, and thoroughly unselfish, and like most of the greatest, he made his own way up, from poverty to eminence.

James Cook, afterward the renowned traveler, was the son of a farm laborer, in the county of Yorkshire, in England, and his father thought his son well provided for, when he apprenticed him, at thirteen, to a country drygoods man, called a "haberdasher" in England. Young Jimmy, however, wouldn't be a counter-jumper. He was born to be a sailor, and a sailor he would be. He at last prevailed on his master to discharge him, when he apprenticed himself to a coal company, to learn to be a sailor on board a collier.

This may sound strange to us in America, but the fact is, that in England these colliers form the great school for seamen. The coal-mines of Newcastle, on the river Tyne, are so close to the wharves, that it costs less than half to carry coal over the world from there, than from anywhere else. Where every pound of our American coal has to come by railroad in cars, the Newcastle coal once dumped in a collier costs nothing but the wages of a few sailors to transport by the four hundred tons at a time. It is this very fact of having plenty of coal close to the seaboard that has made England as rich as she is, and were the coal taken away, the blow would be fatal.

These colliers are all stout, cheap vessels. Nothing "fancy" is seen about them. They are almost all square-rigged, and generally brigs. Coal-dust flies about them so long and so constantly that it becomes useless to clean them. Ship, deck, sails and sailors are all the same dingy hue. Of sailors there are always as few as possible. To pay a dozen, where five or six can do the work somehow, would make coal dear. Consequently, the crew of a collier learns to do all sorts of sailors' work, short-handed, in the North Sea, amid weather almost always rough, often stormy. It is thus that the English coal trade becomes the best nursery for seamen in the world.

Here it was that young Cook passed his apprenticeship and became a sailor, in a sooty, grimy collier, sailing between Newcastle and London, sometimes carrying a cargo over to quaint old Amsterdam, where the solemn Dutchmen sit by their frog-pots and smoke their pipes, now and then crossing to Calais and Boulogne, with coals for the Frenchmen. All the time he was at sea he was learning to be a sailor. When he was in port, all his leisure hours were spent over books in the cabin, while his comrades were getting drunk at the nearest ale-house.

For a long time he could not get money enough to buy books, and had read through those in the little cabin library before he could buy one of his own. At last he obtained a tattered old copy of a book on navigation, and then he was happy. He knew that, until he could work latitude and longitude, he could

not hope to command a ship. Trigonometry and navigation are notoriously hard studies, and young Cook had no one to help him, yet it is a fact recorded by himself that he was able to work an observation in three weeks from the time he took up the book.

Now he was speedily advanced, and by the time he was twenty-one he was mate of a ship. His apprenticeship over, he left the grimy collier, and went on board the Spanish traders. It was while first mate of a vessel lying in the Thames, in 1755, that our French and Indian war was at its height, and Braddock was defeated. The news roused such a storm in England that every one called for vengeance on the French, by sea, and the press-gang started vigorously to impress seamen.

This press-gang was quite a feature of the British navy in those days, and late into the present century, when it was at last abolished. It consisted of a number of parties from the different ships in port, that wanted crews and couldn't get them. The reason why the sailors wouldn't go on a king's ship was simple. They could get twice as much pay on any merchant ship, and plenty of liberty. Naturally they stayed away. The press-gang from the various ships started out at night, under one or more officers, all armed to the teeth, and went through all the places in town where sailors lodged. Whenever they found a sailor, or some one who looked like one, they knocked him down, handcuffed him and bore him away to their ship. The law protected them.

It is not very surprising that the sailors in London should hide themselves away when the press-gang began to work. Cook hid himself among the rest. The cruel press-gang would have thrown him in with some low crowd of brutes, without caring for all his talent, simply because he was a merchant officer, not a king's officer. However, the press-gang soon became more searching than ever. Sailors must be had, to whip the French, who had dared to whip the British lion. Cook saw that it was no use hiding. The shopkeepers and peaceable citizens were full of valor, and wanted to whip the French—by proxy. Of course they didn't want to go themselves, but they wanted soldiers and sailors to do it for them. The case is a common one in every land. Cook's friends kept sneering at him, and asking him "why he didn't go to serve the king and fight the French?" No one wanted to go with him, however.

Cook's inclinations were all toward knowledge and science. He was not a hero of war, delighting in battle. He didn't want to go, but he didn't want to be pressed as a common sailor. Finally, he made up his mind to volunteer. Dressing himself in his best, he went to the admiralty office, and offered himself to the government. By so doing, he secured a decent reception, and was made a petty officer. On board a king's ship he soon found, that if his pay was less, his opportunities of learning scientific seamanship were infinitely more.

It was only four years later that he was made a "master," and put in command of a sloop. This was wholly owing to his scientific knowledge, then so rare in the navy of any country, used especially in surveying the coast of America and the St. Lawrence river. Cook's vessel took part in Wolfe's famous expedition to Quebec, but his services were entirely scientific. In the course of nine years he rose to the important appointment of marine surveyor to the North American coasts. Few of us think, as we look at our maps of America, nowadays, that most of the work on which they depend was done a hundred and twenty years since by Captain Cook, but so it is.

At last came the great event of his life. He was appointed, in 1767, to the rank of lieutenant, put in command of the ship "Endeavor," and sent, with three gentlemen of science, astronomer, botanist and zoologist, to observe the transit of Venus over the sun's disk, from a station in the Pacific Ocean. That voyage was the most important one made since Magellan circumnavigated the globe. The Pacific Ocean was then almost unknown, save for the Sandwich Islands. Magellan first, and Lord Anson later, each took almost the same track from Cape Horn toward Canton. There was a vague supposition that a great southern continent existed somewhere below the equator, but nothing certain was known. Cook's voyage, lasting four years, revealed the fact that the whole Pacific Ocean was studded with a multitude of small islands, and that Australia was the largest island in the world. It revealed also the distance of the sun from the earth, by the transit of Venus, and laid the foundation of all our modern astronomy. The last and most valuable of Cook's discoveries on this voyage was, however, the means of preventing scurvy on long voyages. Hitherto this disease had proved a frightful scourge. Twenty years before, when Anson went round the world, out of eight hundred men, in three ships, he lost all but enough to bring one ship home. Cook, in his passage to the Sandwich Islands, lost twenty-eight men, and then discovered the true way of preventing scurvy—feeding fruit and vegetables. From that day he lost no more, and since that time scurvy has become unknown on long voyages, by following where Cook led the way.

Cook's first voyage made him a commander. His second lasted three years, to find out if any southern continent existed. He proved that there was none, unless down among the icebergs of the South Pole. That voyage made him a post-captain. His third and last voyage began in the very month when the American Congress issued the Declaration of Independence, July, 1776. To Cook, absorbed in science, war was nothing, discovery everything. While the American Revolution was raging, he was tranquilly exploring the North Pacific to Behring's Straits, trying to find the Northwest Passage. It was his desire, while at the Sandwich Islands, that this intrepid navigator was treacherously murdered by the savages. Captain Cook made more discoveries than any other navigator before or since. He was the first scientific explorer that ever traveled, and his maps of the Pacific are used to this day.

A prominent citizen of Denton, Md., set that town in an uproar one day last week. He was intoxicated and an officer was sent to arrest him, but he took refuge in his garret with his gun and plenty of ammunition, and hid himself to the minion of the law. Once the officer demanded his surrender, at the same time presenting a pistol. The response was a charge of shot that struck so close to the officer that he beat a hasty retreat. Then the intoxicated citizen ventured down into the parlor, and presenting his gun from the front window threatened to take the life of any one who should attempt to arrest him. He held out from 3 until 8 p. m., and then, overcome by frequent potations, he fell asleep. While he was in this condition the valiant officer stealthily entered the room, took the gun away and handcuffed him.